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MANY MANSIONS

BEING STUDIES IN

ANCIENT RELIGIONS AND MODERN THOUGHT

WILLIAM SAMUEL LILLY

HONORARY FELLOW OF PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE

Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα τὸν οὐδέποτε ἄνδρες ἑώμεν
ἔρρητον· μεσταὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγνυαί,
πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραί, μεστή δὲ θάλασσα,
καὶ λιμένες· πάντα δὲ Διὸς κεχρήμεθα πάντες.
Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμέν.

ARATUS



LONDON
GEORGE BELL & SONS

1907

*This Edition is intended for circulation only in India
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FRANCIS AIDAN GASQUET, D.D.

ABBOT-PREIDENT OF THE ENGLISH

BENEDICTINE ORDER

MY DEAR ABBOT,

With your gracious permission, I dedicate these pages to you, in token of a deeply prized friendship, and in recognition of great obligations laid upon me, as upon all serious students of English history, by your learned and luminous writings.

I am, my dear Abbot,

Very truly yours,

W. S. LILI

ATHENÆUM CLUB,

September 10, 1907.

ADVERTISEMENT

IN 1884 the Author published a book called *Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*, which was received with a favour very gratifying to him, and which went through several editions. It has long been out of print and, for several reasons, he has not thought well to reissue it in its original form. Portions of it have found place in other of his works, and it has supplied the materials for the essays on *The Saints of Islām* and *Modern Pessimism* in the present volume, which is an attempt to deal, in what the Author ventures to think a less inadequate manner, with some of the topics discussed in the former one. His thanks are due to Mr. Murray for permission to reclaim from the *Quarterly Review* the article on *The Sacred Books of the East*, and to Messrs. Chapman and Hall for a like permission in respect of the second, third, fourth, fifth and seventh essays, which were originally published in the *Fortnightly Review*, and which have now received alterations and additions.

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I

The Sacred Books of the East¹

(I)

THERE are few things more interesting in the history of nineteenth-century scholarship than the career of Professor Max Müller. The first mention of his name by an English writer of repute which I remember to have seen, occurs in the *Boyle Lectures* of Frederick Denison Maurice on the *Religions of the World*—a volume accounted, not unjustly, when it appeared in 1846, a very significant sign of the times. In the passage to which I refer, Maurice indicates “the chief helps”—very scanty ones—“which the Western student possesses for a knowledge of the earliest Hindu faith,” and goes on to welcome the addition to them which might be expected from “a young German, now in London, whose knowledge of Sanskrit is profound, and his industry *plus quam Germanica*, and who has it in contemplation to publish and translate all the *Vedas*.” That young German was Max Müller, who

¹ *The Sacred Books of the East*. Translated by various Oriental scholars and edited by F. Max Müller. Series I and II. Forty-nine vols. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1879-1902.

soon made full proof of the endowments with which Maurice credited him. He did not, indeed, "publish and translate all the *Vedas*," but he gave the world a complete edition of the *Rig Veda*, together with the gloss of Sāyana, by far the most authoritative of the commentators; and in the two series of *The Sacred Books of the East*, we have English versions from his pen of some of the more striking and valuable portions of Vedic literature. But this is only a small part of the world's debt to what Maurice aptly called "his industry surpassing even that of Germans." For more than half a century from the time when Maurice wrote, Max Müller laboured with "an ardent unquenchable zeal," not only in the fields of Oriental scholarship and comparative philology, but in the contiguous domains of the science and philosophy of religion; reaping those abundant harvests which are garnered in his many precious volumes, and all the time "wearing his wisdom lightly," and ever ready, with gracious and winning kindness, to impart from his ample stores to less richly endowed scholars. Well did Dean Church describe him as "one who moves with ease under an accumulation and weight of the most varied and minute knowledge, sufficient to crush most minds, but who brings to it a power and versatility of genius and interpreting imagination, which invests his learning with the grace of poetry, and who, a German, has gained a command over the resources of English, which an Englishman might envy."

But it is not my intention, upon the present

occasion, to review and estimate Max Müller's life-work, or to dwell further upon "the memory of a man unstained," whose religious and ethical character was upon the same high level as his intellectual. My immediate concern is with the translations of *The Sacred Books of the East*, planned by him so long ago as 1876, and carried on, amid difficulties and discouragements of all kinds, with signal success. An "invaluable series," Sir Henry Maine rightly called it; and a very competent German scholar, writing in the *Literarisches Centralblatt*,¹ did not hesitate to express the opinion that it had done more than anything else to open Sanskrit literature to the world. To speak of it in any detail would, of course, be impossible within the narrow bounds of this essay. All that I can do is to indicate in the briefest outline, and as if by a few strokes of a pencil, what the forty-nine volumes of *The Sacred Books* contain, and then to point to some of the more striking aspects of their practical value.

Now the religions of the world may be divided into two great classes—those which possess authoritative Sacred Books and those which possess them not. Max Müller's object was to present English renderings of the most important documents of the six great book-religions, besides Christianity, which are found among men, three of them Brahminism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism, being Aryan; two, Confucianism

¹ Of April 11, 1891. His words are: "Diese Erschliessung der Sanskritliteratur für alle Welt ist in hervorragender Weise durch das grosse Unternehmen Max Müller's gefördert worden."

and Tāoism, Turanian, if the word be still admissible ; and one, Mohammedanism, Semitic. But on this subject it will be well to let Max Müller speak for himself. The following is a quotation from the Programme which he put forward in October 1876 :—

“There are not many nations that have preserved sacred writings ; and many of those that have been preserved have but lately become accessible to us in their original form through the rapid advance of Oriental scholarship in Europe. Neither Greeks, nor Romans, nor Germans, nor Celts, nor Slaves have left us anything that deserves the name of Sacred Books. The Homeric Poems are national Epics, like the *Rāmāyana* and the *Nibelunge* ; and the Homeric Hymns have never received that general recognition or sanction which alone can impart to the poetical effusions of personal piety the sacred or canonical character which is the distinguishing feature of the Vedic Hymns. The sacred literature of the early inhabitants of Italy seems to have been of a liturgical rather than of a purely religious kind ; and whatever the Celts, the Germans, the Slaves may have possessed of sacred traditions about their gods and heroes, having been handed down by oral tradition chiefly, has perished beyond all hope of recovery. Some portions of the *Eddas* alone give us an idea of what the religious and heroic poetry of the Scandinavians may have been. The Egyptians possessed Sacred Books ; and some of them, such as *The Book of the Dead*, have come down to us in various forms. There is a translation of *The Book of the Dead* by Dr. Birch, published in the fifth volume of Bunsen’s *Egypt* ; and a new edition and translation of this important work may be expected from the combined labours of Birch, Chabas, Lepsius, and Naville. In Babylon and Assyria, too, important fragments of what may be called a Sacred Literature have lately come to light. The interpretation, however, of these Hieroglyphic and Cuneiform texts is as yet so difficult that, for the present, they are of

interest to the scholar only, and hardly available for historical purposes. Leaving out of consideration the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, it appears that the only great and original religions which profess to be founded on Sacred Books, and have preserved them in manuscript, are :—

1. The religion of the Brahmins.
2. The religion of the followers of Buddha.
3. The religion of the followers of Zarathustra (Zoroaster).
4. The religion of the followers of Khung-fū-zze (Confucius).
5. The religion of the followers of Lāo-zze (Lāotze).
- 6. The religion of the followers of Mohammed."

* * * * *

"It will be my endeavour to divide the twenty-four volumes, which are contemplated in this Series, as equally as possible among the six religions. But much must depend on the assistance which I receive from Oriental scholars, and also on the interest and the wishes of the public."

The number of the volumes of *The Sacred Books* has more than doubled Max Müller's estimate. Instead of twenty-four volumes, there are forty-nine. I will proceed to point out what is done in them for the better knowledge of each of the six religions above mentioned. I will indicate, as precisely as may be, the actual extent of the canonical scriptures (so to speak) of each, and then I will show how far those scriptures have been translated by Max Müller and his associates.

(II)

First, then, as to Brahminism. I use the term with reluctance, for it is too narrow ; but, upon the whole,

it is preferable to Hinduism, which is too wide ; no one can say what Hinduism is, where it begins or where it ends. The religious literature of Brāhmipism is of vast extent, and is divided into two classes—*Sruti*,¹ or revelation, and *Smriti*, or tradition. Both classes are held sacred, but the authority of *Smriti* is only secondary or derivative. The word *Sruti* signifies “that which is heard directly ;” *Smriti*, “that which is remembered and handed down.” The *Sruti* literature consists of the *Vedas*. The term *Veda* means knowledge—the supreme knowledge issuing, like breath, from the self-existing Being, and, like him, self-existent. This was heard, or even seen, by ancient sages called Rishis, and, thus supernaturally received by them was, for long generations, transmitted directly through Brahmins, the depositaries of the divine word. Hindu theologians vie with one another in celebrating its transcendent authority. Here it must suffice to quote the dictum of Manu : “The *Veda* is beyond the power and beyond the reason of man ; that is certain. The imperishable *Veda* supports all creatures, and is the highest means of salvation for this creature man.”

There are, as perhaps I need hardly say, four *Vedas*, the oldest and most authoritative of which is the *Rig-Veda* ; and I know no better account of them than that given by Professor Sayce in his *Introduction to the Science of Language*.

“The *Rig-Veda*,” he writes, “is a collection of hymns and

¹ Properly *Śruti* : but throughout this essay diacritical marks are not used, except only the long mark over vowels.

poems of various dates, some of which go back to the earliest days of the Aryan invasion of north-western India ; the whole collection, however, may be roughly ascribed to at least the fourteenth or fifteenth century B.C. In course of time it came to assume a sacred character, and the theory of inspiration, invented to support this, goes much beyond the most extreme theory of verbal inspiration ever held in the Jewish or the Christian Church. The *Rig-Veda* was divided into ten *mandalas*, or books, each *mandala* being assigned to some old family ; and out of these were formed three new *Vedas*—the *Yajur*, the *Sāma*, and the *Atharva*. The *Yajur* and the *Sāma* may be described as prayer-books compiled from the *Rig* for the use of the choristers and the ministers of the priests, and contain little besides what is found in the earliest and most sacred *Veda*. . . . The *Ātharvāna* may be described as a collection of poems mixed up with popular sayings, medical advice, magical formulæ, and the like.”

So much concerning *Sruti*. As to the second and inferior class of Hindu Sacred Books, which, though founded on the Vedic revelation, are thought to have been delivered by human authors, I shall cite the clear and compendious description given by Sir Monier Williams in his work *Hinduism*.

“In its widest acceptation *Smriti* may be said to denote almost the whole of post-Vedic literature under four heads : (a) the six *Vedāṅgas* (viz., 1. the *Kalpa*, or *Srauta-sūtras*, which are rules for applying the Mantra and Brāhmana to Vedic sacrifices ; 2. *Sikshā*, or the science of pronunciation ; 3. *Chandas*, or metre ; 4. *Nirukta*, or exposition of the Veda ; 5. *Vyākaraṇa*, or grammar ; 6. *Jyotiṣa*, or astronomy) ; (b) the *Smārta-sūtras*, under the two divisions of *Grihya-sūtras*, or rules relating to domestic rites, and *Samayācārīka-sūtras*, relating to conventional usages ; (c) the *Dhārma-sāstras*, or “Law-books,” especially the laws of Manu, Yājñavalkya, and

other so-called inspired lawgivers, supposed to have grown out of the *Smārta-sūtras*; (d) the *Bhakti-sāstras*, including the *Itihāsas*, or "legendary poems," viz., the great epic poem called *Mahābhārata*, and the other great epic called *Rāmāyana* (though the latter is rather a *Kāvya* by a known human author than an *Itihāsa* attributed to superhuman authorship); and including also the eighteen *Purānas*, or ancient legendary histories, with their train of eighteen Inferior *Purānas* (*Upapurānas*), and subsequent *Tantras*."

Such are the Sacred Books of Brahminism. Of course Professor Max Müller and his learned associates by no means contemplated a translation of all of them—an enterprise for which the forty-nine volumes of the two series would have been utterly insufficient. To *Sruti* they devote ten volumes, in which they present versions of some of the most striking and characteristic portions of Vedic literature. To post-Vedic literature, *Smṛiti*, eleven volumes have been assigned; and these contain translations of the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, the most important of the *Grihya-Sūtra*, the *Institutes of Manu and Vishnu*, the *Aphorisms of Apastamba*, *Vasishtha*, and *Baudhāyana*, and certain minor law-books, the *Bhagavad-Gīta* and two other *Gītas*. Let us glance at the *Sruti* literature presented to us in *The Sacred Books*, and then at the *Smṛiti*.

The *Veda* consists of three parts which are known as *Mantras*, *Brāhmaṇa*, and *Upanishad*—Hymns, Ritual Rules, and Philosophical Treatises, we may roughly say. The Hymns of the *Rig-Veda* are of course the oldest part of these, and are of unique interest and importance in the history of religion.

Translations of some of the principal of them are given in vols. xxxii and xlviii of *The Sacred Books*, those in the first-mentioned volume being by Max Müller, and those in the second-mentioned by Dr. Oldenberg. I need hardly say how admirably both these distinguished scholars have executed their task—a task the arduousness of which it is not easy for those unversed in Oriental studies to appreciate. But on this point I will quote the words of Max Müller:—

“It is difficult,” he writes in his Preface to his translation of the Hymns, “to explain to those who have not themselves worked at the *Veda*, how it is that, though we may understand almost every word, yet we find it so difficult to lay hold of a whole chain of connected thought, and to discover expressions that will not throw a wrong shade on the original features of the ancient words of the *Veda*. We have, on the one hand, to avoid giving to our translations too modern a character, or paraphrasing instead of translating; while, on the other, we cannot retain expressions which, if literally rendered in English, or any modern tongue, would have an air of quaintness or absurdity totally foreign to the intention of the ancient poets. There are, as all Vedic scholars know, whole verses which, as yet, yield no sense whatever. There are words the meaning of which we can only guess.”

In volume xlii we have a translation by Professor Maurice Bloomfield of the most characteristic Hymns of the *Atharva-Veda*, comprising but one third of the entire work. Professor Bloomfield, like Professor Max Müller and Dr. Oldenberg, does not merely translate, but supplies a learned introduction and a copious commentary.

Singularly interesting are these specimens of the earliest religious conceptions and aspirations of the Indian branch of the Aryan race. There is an incommunicable charm, as of the breath of spring, or the prattle of childhood, about this literature, which appealed strongly, as might have been expected, to the delicate and sensitive intellect of Dean Church. He speaks tenderly of "its natural freshness and comparative simplicity in its apparent effort really to recognise and express the mystery of what is seen in nature and believed beyond it"; and he acknowledges warmly "our great debt to the scholars who have opened to us a glimpse of that primeval and mysterious world." "The common and prominent element in these Hymns," he adds, "is their sense of the greatness and wonder and mystery of external nature. The composers of them were profoundly impressed by the conviction that in its familiar but overpowering magnificence, and behind its screen, there was a living presence and power greater than itself, and its master, to which, though out of sight and beyond reach, men could have access . . . and what they so keenly felt, and so awfully acknowledged, they had attained an adequate instrument to body forth in words." I can find room here for only one of these compositions—it is a very characteristic one—a *Hymn to the Dawn*, as translated by Max Müller :—

"She shines on us like a young wife, rousing every living being to go to his work. The fire had to be kindled by men; she brought light by striking down darkness.

"She rose up, spreading far and wide, and moving towards every one. She grew in brightness, wearing her brilliant garment. The mother of the cows (of the morning clouds), the leader of the days, she shone gold-coloured, lovely to behold.

"She, the fortunate, who brings the eye of the gods, who leads the white and lovely steed (of the sun), the Dawn, was seen, revealed by her rays, with brilliant treasures she follows every one.

"Thou who art a blessing where thou art near, drive far away the unfriendly; make the pastures wide, give us safety! Remove the haters, bring treasures! Raise up wealth to the worshipper, thou mighty Dawn.

"Shine for us with thy best rays, thou bright Dawn, thou who lengthenest our life, thou the love of all, who givest us food, who givest us wealth in cows, horses and chariots.

"Thou, daughter of the Sky, thou high-born Dawn, whom the Vasishtas magnify with songs, give us riches high and wide: all ye gods, protect us always with your blessings."

The second division of the *Veda*, representing a later stratum of religious thought than the *Mantras*, is the *Brāhmanas*, a translation of one of which, the *Satapatha-Brāhmana*, fills volumes xii, xxvi, xli, xliii, and xliv of the *Sacred Books*. The *Brāhmanas* are ritualistic precepts and illustrations, written in prose by Brahmins, chiefly as Directories in conducting the complicated sacrificial services which prevailed at the time of their composition. Unlike the *Mantras*, they are of no general interest. Professor Eggeling, to whom we owe the translation of the *Satapatha-Brāhmana*, plaintively remarks: "For wearisome prolixity of exposition, characterised by dogmatic assertions and a flimsy symbolism, rather than by

serious reasoning, these works are perhaps not equalled anywhere." Still they are of extreme value to the student as throwing a flood of light upon the religious condition of India, from, say, 800 B.C. to 500 B.C. How numerous sacrifices then were, is indicated by the fact that in no other language is there so large a proportion of words relating to them as in Sanskrit. Of course in the modern phase of Hinduism they have disappeared, except in the temples of the sanguinary goddess Kālī.

But the division of Vedic literature possessing widest and deepest interest is the *Upanishads*, some of the most important of which have been translated by Max Müller in volumes i and xv of *The Sacred Books*—a far more arduous task, I may observe, than the translation of the Vedic Hymns, on account of the remoteness of Oriental metaphysics from European thought. Western philosophy—all that is worthy of the name of philosophy as distinguished from speculative physics—is essentially Hellenic. We are the intellectual offspring of Plato and Aristotle. But Hindu philosophy is cast in quite another mould. It is *sui generis*. Hence the extreme difficulty of translating certain of its technical terms into the tongues of the modern world. Take the word *ātman*, for example. No equivalent for it can be found in French. The only course for a translator of the *Upanishads* into that language is to retain the original, with an explanatory note. In English, "self" most nearly represents it, and has, very properly, been employed by Max Müller to translate

it. These singular treatises deserve far more than the passing mention which can be given to them herè. What the word *Upanishad* means is extremely doubtful. Hindu philosophers derive it from the root "sàd," in the sense of destruction, because these holy writings destroy ignorance and passion; or in the sense of approaching, which the word also bears, because they bring a man near to Brahman. European scholars, more scientifically, if less picturesquely, take the word to mean "session," particularly a session of pupils at a respectful distance from their teacher; for the root "sad" means also to sit.

The controversy is both interesting and significant.¹ Whatever may be the true end of it, there can be no question that Max Müller is well warranted in saying, "The Hindus in the *Upanishads* reached the loftiest heights of philosophy." Schopenhauer, who, for a knowledge of them, was obliged to have recourse to the not always very intelligible Latin version made by Anquetil Duperron from a Persian translation, goes a great deal further in his admiration. He writes—I compress him a little—"How is every one who, by diligent study, has become familiar with that incomparable work, stirred to the very depth of his soul! From every sentence deep, original, and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by

¹ Professor Hopkins, in his very learned work, *The Great Epic of India* (p. 10), remarks that in the *Mahābhārata* "the word has two distinct meanings: it means, on the one hand, mystery, secret wisdom, essential truth, essence . . . but in other cases it is clearly a literary work, even standing in antithesis to the mysteries with which it is sometimes identical."

a high and holy and earnest spirit. How thoroughly is the mind here washed clean of all early engrafted Jewish superstitions, and of all philosophy that cringes before those superstitions! In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating. "It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death." And he anticipates that "Indian wisdom will flow back upon Europe and produce a thorough change in our knowing and thinking." How far that prediction will be accomplished, remains to be seen. But before we pass away from this subject there is one remark which I should like to make. It is sometimes claimed for Kant that he has laid bare the whole apparatus of our thought; that he has revealed for us the *how* of our knowledge; although, indeed, his doctrine on this matter was anticipated by Aquinas. He has shown that everything is represented to the senses through the mind, in what are called "*Vorstellungen*"—intellectual representations—under those conditions of time and space which we cannot think away. Thus do we know things phenomenally. Now phenomena are pretty much what the *Upanishads*, or rather a later school of philosophers founding themselves on the *Upanishads*, call *māyā*—illusion. They are the appearances of things, not things in themselves. Can we get beyond phenomena? Can we penetrate the veil of *māyā*? Elsewhere, in the present volume, I shall have to speak of Kant's answer to that question.¹ The Hindu philosophers undertake to indicate

¹ See page 100.

the way in which man may find his true self (*ātman*) independent of all, and identical with the highest Self: And here I may fitly cite a few sentences from Max Müller.

“There is not what could be called a philosophical system in these *Upanishads*. They are, in the true sense of the word, guesses at truth, frequently contradicting each other, yet all tending in one direction. The keynote of the whole *Upanishads* is ‘Know thyself,’ but with a much deeper meaning than that of the *Γινώθι σεαυτόν* of the Delphic Oracle. The ‘Know thyself’ of the *Upanishads* means, Know thy true self, that which underlies thine Ego, and find it and know it in the highest, the Eternal Self, the One without a second, which underlies the whole world. This was the final solution of the search after the Infinite, the Invisible, the Unknown, the Divine, a search begun in the simplest hymns of the *Veda*, and ended in the *Upanishads*, or, as they were afterwards called, the *Vedānta*, the end or the highest object of the *Veda*.”

The kernel of the *Vedānta* philosophy—“the great sentence,” it is called—is “tat twam asi,” “that art thou.” Thou, O neophyte, art thyself the Brahman whom thou seekest to know; thou thyself art a part of the All!

And now let us glance at the post-Vedic and less sacred literature (*Smṛiti*) translated in volumes ii, vii, viii, xiv, ~~xxv~~, xxix, xxx, xxxiii, xxxiv, xxxviii, and xlviii. The last three mentioned volumes are from the pen of M. Thibaut, and contain the *Vedānta-Sūtras*—the word *Sūtra* means a string—short aphorisms embodying, in their totality, a complete body of *Vedānta* philosophy, and presenting, to quote a dictum

of Edgar Quinet, "the most lofty and solemn affirmation of the rights of absolute being ever made in the world." Volume viii contains a translation by a learned Hindu, Mr. Telang, of the well-known *Bhagavad-Gīta*, a poem characterised by William von Humboldt as "the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue"; and of two other *Gītas*. In volumes xxix and lxx Dr. Oldenberg translates the *Grihya-Sūtras*, a manual of domestic religious rites. The rest of the volumes above enumerated are devoted to the law-books, of which unquestionably the most important—though the others are far from unimportant—is the compilation known as *The Laws of Manu*, contained in volume xxv, and to it I must devote a few lines.

The Laws of Manu is perhaps the work of highest authority in Smṛiti literature. It is a manual not merely of law but of religion and philosophy, and although, doubtless, at first merely a local collection, is now regarded throughout India with a reverence second only to that given to the *Veda*, upon which it is professedly based. "The root of the law," its supposed author declares, "is the *Veda* and the traditions and customs of those who know the *Veda*." I need hardly observe that the demarcation now generally prevailing between jurisprudence and religion was unknown to the antique world. Primitive law was a branch of primitive religion; or, if we like so to put the matter, religion was law in its highest expression. And thus, to quote a classic instance, we find Plato in *The Republic* describing "the erection of temples and the

appointment of sacrifices and other ceremonies in honour of the gods," and "all the observances which we must adopt in order to propitiate the inhabitants of the other world," as "the most momentous, the most august, and the highest acts of legislation." Who Manu was, and when he lived, we know not; nor shall we ever pierce "the mists of fabled time" which hide that knowledge from us. His name is generally derived from "man," "to know"—to know the meaning of the *Veda*, that is. He is regarded as the mouth-piece of Brahma, the real giver of the precepts which he delivered—"God spake these words and said." We may account of him as a sort of Hindu Moses; nor will his laws always suffer by comparison with the code ascribed to the Hebrew legislator.

But *The Laws of Manu*, as we have them, are not wholly the primitive legislation which they profess to be. They are a recast, by a sage called Bhrigu, of a more ancient *Dharma*. This has been established by Max Müller's weighty and ingenious arguments, now accepted as conclusive by all competent scholars. But there can be little doubt that Max Müller was in error in ascribing so late a date as the fourth century of our era to our present *Manu-Smriti*, and that Sir Henry Maine, following Max Müller too implicitly, and indeed going beyond him, was led to undervalue it.¹ Dr. Bühler, whose untimely death it is not too much to call an irreparable loss to Sanskrit scholarship, has shown in the Introduction to volume xxv that the *Manu-Smriti*, as we have it, is regarded as a law-book

¹ See chap. i of his *Early Law and Custom*.

“claiming the allegiance of all Aryans, and generally acknowledged by them,” and that it must be considered as merely a new edition of the original text. He is of opinion that “it certainly existed in the second century A.D., and seems to have been composed between that date and the second century B.C.”; and in this opinion Professor Cowell and Mr. Talboys Wheeler concur. For a full discussion of the point I must refer my readers to Bühler’s masterly pages. I cannot pass away from them without observing that this edition of his—framed, as he modestly says, on the translation of Sir William Jones—seems to approach as nearly as possible to perfection. Accurate and ample scholarship is displayed in every line of it. The Introduction is a model of lucid and ingenious criticism. The Appendix of quotations from Manu found in other Hindu law-books represents a vast amount of learned labour; and the synopsis of parallel passages from the *Dharma-Sūtras* and *Smritis*, as well as of the wholly or partially identical verses in the *Mahābhārata Parāśara*, *Māna Sraaddhakalpa*, the *Upanishads*, and other works, is a masterpiece of erudition.

(III)

So much must suffice as to the Brahminical literature translated in the two series of *The Sacred Books*. We will now go on to Buddhism. And here we shall do well to put ourselves chiefly under the

guidance of that most accomplished and indefatigable scholar, Professor Rhys Davids, who has done more than any one else to reveal to us the secrets of this great religion—the religion for more than two thousand years of half mankind, and still the most widely diffused of the world's creeds. Buddhism, of course, like Christianity, has undergone endless transformations. Of all religions the dictum of Aquinas holds good: "Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur." It is received according to the measure of the recipient; its development varies vastly with the soil into which it is cast. The Buddhism of Thibet is as much removed from the Buddhism of Sākya-Muni as, let me say, the Christianity of Abyssinia from the Christianity of Jesus Christ. The Buddhism of China is very far from identical with the Buddhism of Ceylon. The Buddhism of Japan differs in many very important particulars from the Buddhism of Siam. It is customary, indeed, to speak of two great divisions in Buddhism: to oppose the Buddhism of the Southern Church to the Buddhism of the Northern. But, as Professor Rhys Davids has pointed out, in his *Hibbert Lectures*, this way of speaking is incorrect. "There was," he writes, "a unity in Southern Buddhism, but there has been no such unity in Northern Buddhism. We may talk, indeed, of Northern Buddhism, but it would be better to keep the Buddhism of each of the northern countries, in which it has been adopted, separate and distinct, both in our thoughts and in our language."

One reason of the unity once existing—and,

indeed, not wholly lost—in Southern Buddhism is that it possesses an authoritative scripture canon which the Northern Buddhist churches do not possess.¹ “There is every reason to believe,” writes Mr. Rhys Davids in his *Manual*, “that the *Pāli Pitakas*, now extant in Ceylon, are substantially identical with the books of the Southern canon as settled at the Council of Patna about the year 250 B.C.” It is, unquestionably, to these *Pitakas* that we must go for what is, at all events, the nearest approximation to the teaching of Sākya-Muni and his earliest followers. They are three in number: the *Vinaya-Pitaka*—Discipline for the Order of Buddhist Monks—which contains five treatises; the *Sutta-Pitaka*²—Discourses for the Laity—which contains thirteen treatises; and the *Abhidhamma*, hitherto rendered “Metaphysics,” a translation to which Professor Rhys Davids objects on the ground that, as Buddhism does not recognise a soul, it can have no metaphysics. The *Abhidhamma-Pitaka* contains seven treatises. We should here observe that the word *Pitakas*, which means baskets, is not used, Mr. Rhys Davids tells us, in the Sacred

¹ The mistake is often made that a Sanskrit Buddhist canon was settled at Kanishka's Council in the first century of our era. See Professor Rhys Davids' remarks, *Sacred Books*, vol. xxxvi, Int. pp. 15, 16: “Since that time,” he observes, “the rulers of China, Japan, and Thibet have from time to time published collections of Buddhist books; but none of these collections even purports to be a canon of the Scriptures.”

² *Sutta* is the Pāli equivalent of the Sanskrit *Sūtra*. “The word,” writes Professor Rhys Davids, “was adopted by the Buddhists, and used by them in the sense of a discourse, a chapter, a small portion of a sacred book in which, for the most part, some one point is raised and more or less disposed of.”

Books of the Buddhist canon, and that when it first came into use is unknown. He adds: "The *tertium quid* of the comparison is not the basket, or the box, as a receptacle for preservation, but as a means of handing on; as Eastern navvies removing earth put it into baskets and pass them from hand to hand. So the expression 'the Three Baskets' does not mean 'the three collections,' but the three bodies of oral tradition handed down from teacher to teacher." The three *Pāli Pitakas*, exclusive of the repetitions in them, which are frequent and long, would occupy about double the space of the English Bible. One tenth of them (speaking roughly) has been translated in *The Sacred Books*. Volume x contains Max Müller's version of the *Dhammapada*, sometimes called *The Paths of Religion*, a most interesting collection of verses, chiefly culled from the Buddhist Scriptures—a sort of hymn-book, Professor Rhys Davids calls it—unquestionably setting forth the fundamentals of the Buddha's doctrine. In this volume is also included Professor Fausböll's translation of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, discourses attributed to the Buddha, which, the Professor remarks, "no doubt contains some remnants of primitive Buddhism." In volume xi Professor Rhys Davids gives us seven *Suttas*, selected by him as containing "the most essential, the most original, and the most attractive part of Gotama's teaching"; while, in conjunction with Dr. Oldenberg, he also gives us, in volumes xiii, xvii, and xx, a translation of the *Vinaya* Texts. We further owe to Mr. Rhys Davids a translation of *The Questions of King Milinda*, filling

volumes xxxv and xxxvi. This work purports to be a series of conversations between Nagasēna, a famous Buddhist sage, and the Bactrian monarch Menanda, resulting in that sovereign's conversion. It is not reckoned among the canonical Scriptures of the Southern Church, but I am extremely glad that it has been included in *The Sacred Books*. The learned translator goes so far as to call it "the masterpiece of Indian prose, and, indeed, the best book of its class, from a literary point of view, that had been produced in any country."

Unquestionably, the discovery of this Pāli literature, of which I have been writing, must be ranked among the most considerable achievements of nineteenth-century scholarship. It places before us what Professor Rhys Davids well calls "a rounded and complete picture of a new and strange religious movement," destined, as we have seen, very deeply to affect vast numbers of the human race. How dense was the darkness which shrouded that movement not much more than half a century ago, may be seen from the view of Buddhism taken by the late Mr. Maurice in those *Boyle Lectures* of his to which I have already referred. Struck by its vast extent, he devoted himself, with his usual conscientiousness, to the task of ascertaining the principal facts about it, using the best authorities within his reach. The two chief conclusions to which he was led were that "Buddhism is Theism in its highest form and conception," and that "Thibet must be regarded as its proper centre and home." It was the fate of this memorable man,

as Matthew Arnold once observed with gentle banter, "to spend his life beating the bush with deep emotion, but never starting the hare." We know now that the hierarchical Buddhism of Thibet is a most extraordinary travesty of the doctrine of the Buddha, and that Theism is the last word which should be employed to describe that doctrine. To say, indeed, as some accomplished scholars have said, that it is atheistic, seems to me inaccurate. Gotama, a Hindu of the Hindus, recognised all the innumerable deities of the Brahminical Pantheon; and his followers adopted, or, at all events, respected, the gods of the countries which they evangelised. Buddhism certainly does not possess the conception of the perfect creative God of monotheism, which is the corner-stone of Christianity and of Islām. "A perfect Creator," one of its most accomplished Japanese clergy once observed to me, "could never have called into being so imperfect a world." How the world came to be, he regarded as a question *ultra vires*. It is difficult to find in the terminology of the Western world a label for such a system as Buddhism, based on conceptions very far removed from our ways of thought. Perhaps we should be warranted in accounting as its fundamental position the impermanency of all that is. It professes to point out the way of escape from "the whirlpool of existence," "the yawning gulf of continual birth and death;" by the rooting out of desire, the very source of being. In those who have thus attained to the supreme state of Arahatsip—the crown of Buddhist saintship—Karma is extinguished and

Nirvāṇa, the peace which passeth all understanding, is reached.

Later on in the present volume¹ I shall have to speak of this doctrine of Karma—the thought dominating the teaching of the Buddha. Here I may observe that it is not theological at all, but ethical. It means in substance that a man is the outcome of what he has done in his actual and previous existence; that the real man is the net result of his merits and demerits; and that upon his deeds in this life, and in his past lives, depends his destiny in the future life to which he will be re-born, whether as a god, a man, or a beast, the character of his deeds being determined by his intention. Of course this doctrine was nothing new. It was deeply rooted in the Hindu mind when Gotama began to preach and to teach. The new element in the Buddha's teaching was his conception of knowledge. He placed it, not in apprehension of an Absolute—like earlier Hindu sages—but in a clear conception of the facts of the three worlds, earth, heaven, and hell; or, in other words, in discernment of the true character of the universal law of righteousness ruling throughout those three worlds and supreme over all beings, animal, human, and divine. It is by conformity to this law—sometimes emphatically called the Truth—that deliverance, whether partial or entire, from the evil inseparable from individual existence is to be gained. And so in the priceless book of *Jātaka Tales*—the oldest collection of folk-lore in the world, and the most fascinating—we read that upon one

¹ See pp. 65, 113, 208.

occasion "the Blessed One, opening his lotus mouth, as if he were opening a jewel-casket, scented with heavenly perfume and full of sweet-smelling odours, sending forth his pleasant tones," spake thus: "Life according to the Truth, confers the three happy conditions of existence here below, and the six joys of the Brahmaloas in the heaven of delight, and finally leads to the attainment of Arahatsnip; but life according to the Untruth, leads to re-birth in the four hells, and among the five lowest grades of man." This is the central lesson of the Buddha's teaching. "For the first time in the history of the world," Mr. Rhys Davids observes, "Buddhism proclaimed a salvation which each man could gain for himself, and by himself, in this world, during this life, without having the least reference to God or gods, either great or small."

For two centuries and a half after the death of the Buddha, which event Mr. Rhys Davids places within a few years of 500 B.C., his religion, which was regarded merely as a sect of Hinduism, was confined to a portion of the valley of the Ganges. Then an event took place which transformed it into a world-religion—the conversion of the great King Asoka. The consequences of that event were apparent at once. In India, where stately monasteries arose on all sides, Buddhism became the fashionable religion; and missionaries were sent by the King to all the countries not under his sway between Kashmīr and Ceylon. As time went on, the new faith penetrated to Nepāl, Thibet, China, Japan, and Mongolia; and

as it spread, it underwent those transformations before referred to, upon which I cannot here enter, in the various lands where it was naturalised. In the two series of *The Sacred Books* the Northern Buddhisms are represented by Dr. Kern's translation from the Sanskrit of the *Saddharma Pundarika*, "The Lotus of the True Law" (volume xxi); by Mr. Beal's translation from the Chinese of the *Fo-shi-hing-tsan King* (volume xix), the Chinese text being itself a translation from the Sanskrit, executed in A.D. 420; and by versions from the Sanskrit, contributed by Professor Max Müller, Professor Cowell, and Mr. Takakusu, of certain philosophical treatises of an extremely Pyrrhonist character (volume xlix). All these works belong to the school of the *Mahāyāna* or Greater Vehicle, a school which—to speak merely of its fundamental characteristic—holds up Buddhahood instead of Arahathship as the goal at which every good Buddhist should aim. It is in Thibet that this new doctrine has obtained its fullest and most fantastic development, so that there (to quote once more from Mr. Rhys Davids) "Buddhism, or rather Lamaism, has come to be the exact contrary of the earlier Buddhism."

Closely akin to Buddhism is Jainism: indeed some scholars—among them Lassen—have held it to be merely a form of transformation of Buddhism, so much have the two religions in common. But this opinion is warmly controverted by Herr Jacobi in his Introduction to volume xxii of *The Sacred Books*, which, together with volume xlv, contain his translation from the Prākṛit of certain *Gāṇa-Sūtras*. This learned

man thinks "the origin of the extant Gāṇa literature cannot be placed earlier than 300 B.C.," or two centuries after the date which he assigns to the rise of the sect. It is a somewhat extensive literature, being comprised, as Rajendralala Mitra tells us, in fifty different works, partly in Sanskrit, partly in Māghadī Prākṛit. The Jains do not now number more than a million and a half but among them are some of the wealthiest and most cultivated natives of India. Their cities of temples at Palitāna and Gīrnar, in Gujerat and at Mount Abū, are among the choicest gems of Indian architecture; and some magnificent fanes have recently been erected by them in Calcutta.

(IV)

It is curious that the age of Sākya-Muni should have been also the age of three other great religious teachers whose importance in the history of the world is second only to his—Zoroaster,¹ Confucius, and Lāotze—and also of the sage whom we must account the founder of Hellenic philosophy and the intellectual father of the Western world, Pythagoras. I will proceed to speak briefly of the contribution made by *The Sacred Books* to our knowledge of the religion of the first-named of these illustrious men, the great religion of the Magi, once the dominant creed of a vast empire, now almost extinct in its primitive home,

¹ Many widely differing dates have been assigned to Zoroaster, but this seems the most probable of them.

and represented chiefly by the handful of Parsis—they number only some 100,000—resident, for the most part, in the Bombay Presidency; a creed which, if the issue of the battle of Marathon had been different, might have been the creed of modern Europe.

The rediscovery of Zoroastrianism, as of Buddhism, is a conquest of the modern mind, belonging, however, not to the nineteenth century, but to the eighteenth. So far ago as the year 1700 Thomas Hyde, an Oxford Professor, esteemed the greatest Orientalist of his time, made an attempt, in his learned work, *Veterum Persarum et Parthorum et Medorum Religionis Historia*, to restore the history of the old faith of Iran. His method—an excellent one in itself—was “to combine the accounts of the Mohammedan writers with the true and genuine monuments of ancient Persia.” Unfortunately, he did not so much as know—such knowledge was not possible then—what “the true and genuine monuments of ancient Persia” are. In the place of them he employed recent compilations relating to the last stage of Parsiism. The thickness of the darkness in which he painfully grouped his devious way may be inferred from the chief conclusions at which he arrived. They were these—that the Persians must have been converted from idolatry by Abraham; that their fire-altars were imitations of the altar in the Jewish temple; that Magism was a Sabæan corruption of the primeval faith; that Zoroaster was a disciple of the exiled Jews in Babylon. It is easy now to expose these absurdities. It is not easy to overrate the debt of sound learning to the indefatigable pioneer who

fell into them. Dr. Darmesteter justly observes that Hyde's book was the first true and complete picture of modern Parsiism, and that "it made inquiry into its history the order of the day."

But it was not until half a century later that the real founder of Zend scholarship appeared.

"In 1754," writes Dr. Darmesteter, "a young man, twenty years old, Anquetil Duperron, a scholar of the École des Langues Orientales in Paris, happened to see a facsimile of four leaves of the Oxford *Vendidad*, which had been sent from England, a few years before, to Étienne Fourmont, the Orientalist. He determined at once to give to France both the books of Zoroaster and the first European translation of them. Impatient to set off, without waiting for a mission from the government which had been promised to him, he enlisted as a private soldier in the service of the French East India Company. He embarked at Lorient on the 24th of February, 1755, and after three years of endless adventures and dangers through the whole breadth of Hindustan, at the very time when war was raging between France and England, he arrived at last in Surat, where he stayed among the Parsis for three years more. Here began another struggle, not less hard, but more decisive, against that mistrust and ill-will among the Parsis which had disheartened Fraser; but he came out of it victorious, and succeeded at last in winning from the Parsis both their books and their knowledge. He came back to Paris on the 14th of March, 1764, and deposited, on the following day, at the Bibliothèque Royale the whole of the *Zend-Avesta*, and copies of most of the traditional books. He spent ten years in studying the material he had collected, and published in 1771 the first European translation of the *Zend-Avesta*."

Anquetil Duperron's translation was received by

Oriental scholars generally with incredulity of a by no means polite kind. The Persian lexicographer, Richardson, a plodding and ponderous scholar, thought that he had been imposed upon by Parsi priests, who had palmed off upon his simplicity documents which were manifest forgeries. Meiners and Tychsen, whose opinions carried great weight, at first judged likewise. Sir William Jones overwhelmed the translator and his work with *persiflage* of a Voltairean kind, expressed in French which would not have disgraced Voltaire. But

“Time that solves all doubt
By bringing Truth, his glorious daughter, out,”

has amply vindicated Anquetil Duperron. The documents which he translated are undoubtedly genuine, though his translation is often far from expressing their true sense; which is not surprising, seeing that he possessed neither grammar nor dictionary of the Zend language. The real founder of Zend philology was the illustrious Eugène Burnouf; but, as Dr. Haug justly observes, “he could never have succeeded in laying the foundation without Anquetil’s labours.”

The term “religion of Zoroaster” is, I should note, misleading. Its accredited teachers, of course, desire to place it before us as a complete system, revealed by Ahuramazda to that prophet, just as—to quote some remarks of Max Müller’s in his *Hibbert Lectures*—“most of the writers in the Old Testament wish to place the religion of the Jews before us as ready-made from the beginning, as perfect in all its parts, because

revealed by God, and, if liable to corruption, at all events incapable of improvement. But," he continues, "that the Jewish monotheism was preceded by a polytheism, on the other side of the flood and in Egypt, is now admitted by most scholars; nor would it be easy to find in the same sacred code two more opposite sentiments than the rules and regulations for burnt offerings in Leviticus, and the words of the Psalmist (li, 16): 'For thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it thee; thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.' . . . There is growth here, as evident as can be, however difficult it may seem to some students of religion to reconcile the idea of growth with the character of a revealed religion. Minute scholarship only has been able to discover some older elements in the *Gāthas*; but with that exception, we find in the *Avesta*, too, but few acknowledged traces of real growth."

The sacred literature of Zoroastrianism—or, to use a more correct word, Mazdeism—which we now possess, is a very small part of what once existed. But here let me quote, in a compressed form, the remarks of Dr. Darmesteter, from his Introduction to vol. iv of *The Sacred Books*:—

"The collection of Zend fragments known as the *Zend-Avesta*,"¹ he observes, "is divided, in its usual form, into two

¹ "A very improper designation," Dr. Darmesteter well observes. I shall have occasion to cite shortly some remarks of Dr. West's on this subject. What is commonly called "the Zend language" ought to be called "the

parts. The first part, or the *Avesta*, properly so called, contains the *Vendīdād*, the *Visp̄rad*, and the *Yasna*. The *Vendīdād* is a compilation of religious laws and of mythical tales; the *Visp̄rad* is a collection of litanies for the sacrifice; and the *Yasna* is composed of litanies of the same kind, and of five hymns or *Gāthas* written in a special dialect, older than the general language of the *Avesta*. . . . The second part, generally known as the *Khorda Avestā*, or 'Small Avesta,' is composed of short prayers . . . these are the five *Gāh*, the thirty formulas of the *Sīrōzah*, the three *Afrigān* and the six *Nyāyis*. But it is also usual to include in the *Khorda Avesta*, though forming no real part of it, the *Yasts*, or hymns of praise and glorification to the several *Isads*, and a number of fragments, the most important of which is the *Hadhōkht Nosh*."

In addition to the *Avesta* there is another collection of writings known as *The Pahlavi Texts*, which also the Parsis hold sacred. It is somewhat extensive, and, if translated in its entirety, would fill about thirty-six volumes of *The Sacred Books*. Concerning it I will cite a few words from Dr. West's Introduction to his translations from it, given in vol. v, merely premising that the term "Pahlavi," in its widest extent, is applicable to all the varying forms of the mediæval Persian language.

"Though we must look to the *Avesta* for information regarding the main outlines of the Parsi religion, it is to Pahlavi writings we must refer for most of the details relating to the traditions, ceremonies, and customs of this ancient faith, which styles itself emphatically "the good religion of the Mazdayasnians," and calls its laity "bahdīnān," or "those

Avesta language." It is of great antiquity, being separated only by a short interval from the language of one set of the Cuneiform inscriptions.

of the good religion." In the fragments of the *Avesta* which still exist, we may trace the solid foundations of the religion, laid by philosophic bards and lawgivers of old, with many a mouldering column and massive fragment of the superstructure erected upon them by the ancient priesthood. These are the last remnants of the faith held by Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord (Isaiah xlii, 1), the righteous one (Isaiah xli, 2), or eagle (Isaiah xlii, 11), whom He called from the east, and the shepherd who performed His pleasure (Isaiah xlii, 28); scattered fragments of the creed professed by Darius in his inscriptions, when he attributes his successes to "the will of Auramazdā;" and mouldering ruins of the comparatively pure religion of oriental "barbarism," which Alexander and his civilising Greek successors were unable wholly to destroy, and replace by their own idolatrous superstitions. While in the Pahlavi texts we find much of the mediæval edifice built by later Persian priestcraft upon the old foundations, with a strange mixture of old and new materials, and exhibiting the usual symptoms of declining powers, a strong insistence upon complex forms and minute details, with little of the freedom of treatment and simplicity of outline characteristic of the ancient bards. To understand the relationship between these two classes of Parsi sacred writings, it must be observed that the *Avesta* and *Pahlavi* of the same scripture, taken together, form its *Avesta* and *Zand*, terms which are nearly synonymous with "revelation and commentary." . . . And the latter, being often their only means of understanding the former, has now become of nearly equal authority with the *Avesta* itself. . . . But besides these translations there is another class of Pahlavi religious writings whose authority is more open to dispute. These writings are either translations and Zands of Avesta texts no longer extant, or they contain the opinions and decisions of high-priests of later times, when the Pahlavi language was on the decline. Such writings would hardly be considered of indisputable authority by any Parsi of the present day, unless they coincided with his own

preconceived opinions. But for outsiders they have the inestimable value either of supplying numerous details of religious traditions and customs which would be vainly sought for elsewhere, or of being contemporary records of the religious ideas of the Parsis in the declining days of their Mazdayasnian faith."

To the literature of Zoroastrianism—I use the word under protest—seven volumes of *The Sacred Books* have been devoted. Volumes iv, xxiii, and xxxi contain a translation of the more important parts of the so-called *Zend-Avesta* by Professor Darmesteter and Mr. Mills. In volumes v and xviii Dr. West translates certain *Pahlavi Texts*, and in volumes xxxvii and xlvii the same accomplished scholar gives us the contents of the *Nasks*. This is enough to enable us to form a pretty correct notion of what Zoroastrianism was, and was not. It is perhaps hardly necessary to observe, in correction of a vulgar error, that the Zoroastrians are not fire-worshippers, adorers of the mere material element. They have always protested against such a gross misconception. It is not the material element but the elemental force which they revere. Such reverence is easily explicable. How wonderful, if we weigh the matter well, is the mystery of fire; only less wonderful than the sexual mystery, that most inexplicable of physical facts. Fire, when first discovered by primeval man, became as naturally an object of veneration as were the *lingam* and the *yonî*. Nor was there anything intrinsically irrational in the cult paid to it. Akbar, as Abdulfazl reports, "was of opinion that there was nothing improper in

the homage paid to that exalted element, whereon depends man's existence and the duration of his life." And St. Bonaventura has preserved the singularly touching invocation addressed by St. Francis of Assisi to the flame in which the iron instrument had been placed wherewith, according to the barbarous surgery of the age, "the man of God was to be cauterised for the relief of his eyes." "O brother fire! the Most High has created thee glorious, mighty, beautiful, and useful, above all creatures: be thou propitious and heathful to me at this hour." The Zoroastrian religion was, in truth, not very fully developed monotheism—the worship of one God symbolised and manifested in the elements, and especially in the element of fire; but it recognised, to quote the words of Dr. Darmesteter—I compress them as usual—that while "there is a law in nature, and a God who fixed that never-failing law, there is a war in nature: it contains powers that work for good and powers that work for evil: there are such beings as benefit man and such beings as injure him." I may remark that the Jews during their captivity by the waters of Babylon were unquestionably much influenced by this dualism. The Zoroastrian religion did not borrow from them, as Hyde supposed; it was they who borrowed from it.

(V)

And now let us pass from India to China, and glance at the two great "Turanian" religions, and see

what has been done in *The Sacred Books* to make them better known. I will first speak of Confucianism, described by Dr. Legge as "*par excellence* the religion of China." As we shall presently see, it contains little which Europeans would recognise as a religion at all; and the term Confucianism does not correctly describe it, for Confucius, one of the most conservative spirits that ever lived, claimed to be merely a transmitter of ancient wisdom serviceable for the conduct of this life: he made no reference to another. There is nothing transcendental or spiritual in his teachings. We possess only one work from his pen—the *Khun Khiū*, or the *Spring and Autumn*—and that is merely a brief chronicle of the annals of his native state of Lū, from B.C. 722 to B.C. 481. The short treatise called the *Hsiāo King*, or *Classic of Filial Piety*, is a record, by an unknown hand, of conversation between him and a disciple, and is of somewhat obscure meaning. Dr. Legge thinks it "an attempt to construct a religion on the basis of the cardinal virtue of filial piety." I confess that to me there seems nothing religious in it. The only other works, so far as we are aware, which purport to contain the sage's teaching, are the *Lunyū*, or *Confucian Analects*, a collection of his sayings by certain of his disciples; the *Tā Hsio*, or *Great Learning*; and the *Chung Yung*, or *Doctrine of the Mean*, small digests of his doctrines attributed to his grandson. But the literature called Confucian is very large, and much of it is so long anterior in date to Confucius. The most important parts of it are the *Shū King*, a book of

historical documents, the earliest of which date from the twenty-fourth century B.C.; the *Shih King*, or collection of poetical pieces, some of which are as ancient as 1766 B.C.; and the *Yi King*, or *Book of Changes*, portions of which go back to the fourteenth century B.C. "This work," writes Dr. Legge—I am quoting, as before, from his Preface to volume iii of *The Sacred Books*—"was from the first connected intimately with the practice of divination which, we know from the *Shū*, entered largely into the religion of the ancient Chinese. This goes far to account for its obscure and enigmatical character; but, at the same time, there occur in it, though in a fragmentary manner, so many metaphysical, physical, moral and religious utterances, that the student of it is gradually brought under a powerful fascination." The fourth of the great Chinese classics is the *Lī Kī King*, or the *Record of Rites*. The translations of Confucian texts contributed to *The Sacred Books* by that most accomplished Sino-logist, Dr. Legge, occupy volumes iii, xvi, xxvii, and xxviii.

The veneration in which Confucius is held in China seems quite unaccountable. As I intimated just now, it is difficult to regard him as a religious teacher at all. Like Rousseau, he believed that man is naturally good, and that the evil in the world is the result of bad education and bad laws. He was really a statesman aiming at the reformation of mankind by good laws and by moral suasion—by precepts which sound to us very like platitudes. Certainly they fell flat on those who heard them, for he quite failed to

accomplish his commendable aim. At one time, indeed, he supposed himself to have found in Duke Ting, of Lū, a prince whom his wise saws would inform with the true principles of good government. But eighty beautiful dancing-girls and a hundred and twenty-five horses, sent as a present to that potentate by a neighbouring and jealous Duke T'se, proved sufficient to overthrow the influence of the philosophic minister, who thereupon resigned his office, shaking the dust from off his feet, so to speak, for a testimony against the damsels and the steeds. However, from the date of his death in B.C. 478, or at all events from the time of the Emperor Kaou Te (206-194 B.C.), he has been the object of ever-increasing reverence to his countrymen as the "Most Complete and Perfect Sage,"¹ to quote merely one of the many titles conferred upon him by Imperial Edict. There are throughout China some fifteen hundred temples dedicated to him, the most important and grandiose of them being the one which adjoins his tomb in Shantung. Second only to it in dignity and magnificence among the Confucian fanes, is the Kwo-tsze-keen temple at Peking, to which the Emperor repairs twice a year in state, and invokes the sage as follows, having twice knelt and six times bowed his head to the ground: "Great art thou, O perfect Sage! Thy virtue is full; thy doctrine is complete. Among mortal men there has not been thy equal. All kings honour thee. Thy statutes and laws have come

¹ Fourteen Sages or Holy Men are officially recognised in China, the first being Fuh-he (2852-2737 B.C.), and the last Confucius.

gloriously down. Thou art the pattern of this Imperial school. Reverently have the sacrificial vessels been set out. Full of awe we sound our drums and bells. Possibly the explanation of this amplitude of admiration may be found in the fact that Confucius was "a Chinaman of Chinamen," the supreme representative of the Mongolian mind which is the very antithesis of the Indian—prosaic, practical, unimaginative, and altogether averse from metaphysical speculation. For the rest we may note that he was strong, tall, and well built, with a full red face and a large heavy head.

The other great "Turanian" religion, Tāoism, is represented in *The Sacred Books* by volumes xxxix and xl. They contain translations by Dr. Legge of the *Tāo-teh King* of Lāotze, commonly reckoned the founder of Tāoism, though Dr. Legge thinks it existed before him, and of the writings of Kwang-tze, his most famous disciple. According to the most probable accounts, Lāotze was born in B.C. 604, that is about fifty years before Confucius. Very little is known of him, and the gap in our knowledge is filled by legends. Thus it is averred that his mother conceived him in consequence of the emotion which she felt at the sight of a falling star; that for eighty-one years he dwelt in her womb, and that when at length he was born, his appearance was that of an old man with grey hair—whence the designation Lāotze, "Old Fellow," by which he is still known. The one indisputable fact about his career which has come down to us is that for some time he was Keeper of the Imperial Archives, in which capacity Confucius

visited him, and was dismayed and shocked by the small account which he made of the wisdom of the ancients. The two men could have had little in common. Lāotze was a bold and original thinker, of a transcendental type. He is essentially a mystic, and his religion derives its name of Tāoism from Tāo—the Absolute and Eternal—which he conceived, if M. Julien correctly expounds him, as “*dépourvu d'action, de pensée, de jugement, d'intelligence,*” and as the only reality from which are all things, and to which all things return. The exact meaning of Tāo has much exercised Sinologues. It has been rendered by some as the Way, by others as the Reason, by others, again, as the Word. It would appear to be all these, and would seem to present some analogy to Will, in Schopenhauer's philosophy, the primordial reality, the universal and fundamental essence, whence issue all activities, pervading the universe, primarily unconscious, but attaining consciousness in the world of representation. In a world which is full of evil, peace is to be found only in “laying hold of the great form of Tāo,” and the way to lay hold of this One Reality is by self-abnegation. “One pure act of self-resignation” Lāotze holds to be “worth a hundred thousand exercises of one's own will.” It was doubtless these elements of mysticism and asceticism which rendered Tāoism—as also in later times Buddhism—a living power to multitudes in China, the deeper instincts of whose spiritual nature the mere Utilitarianism or Secularism or Positivism—call it what you will—of Confucius failed to satisfy.

They are elements, it may be observed in passing, which, in the course of twenty-five centuries, appear to have been corrupted into mere abject superstition and magic.

(VI)

It remains to speak of the great religion of Islām, which possesses only one canonical scripture, the Qur'ān, that marvellous book of which Goethe well remarked, "Wherever we take it up, it seems at first repulsive; but gradually it attracts us, it astonishes us, and in the end it compels our admiration." In volumes vi and ix of *The Sacred Books* we have the late Professor Palmer's translation of it, a translation which more than any other reveals to us the spirit and power of the original. "The language of the Qur'ān," he writes, in his masterly Introduction to volume vi, "is universally acknowledged to be the most perfect form of Arab speech. . . . It is noble and forcible, but it is not elegant in the sense of literary refinement. To Mohammed's hearers it must have been startling from the manner in which it brought great truths home to them in the language of their everyday life. . . . Mohammed speaks with a living voice; his vivid word-painting brings at once before the mind the scene he describes or conjures up; we can picture his very attitude when, having finished some marvelously told story of the days of yore, uttered some awful denunciation, or given some glorious promise,

he pauses suddenly and says, with bitter disappointment, 'These are the true stories, and there is no god but God—and yet ye turn aside.' To translate this worthily is a most difficult task." It is, indeed, an impossible task. But I believe I do but express the judgment of the most competent scholars in saying that Professor Palmer's version is by no means unworthy of the original.

(VII)

And now that I have endeavoured to put before my readers a bird's-eye view of *The Sacred Books*, and have briefly summarised what is done for us in them, let me remind my readers that, considerable as it may seem, it is only a beginning. Thus they give us extracts from only two of the four *Vedas*. They put before us, as was pointed out in an earlier page, but one tenth of the canonical books of the Southern Buddhist Church. They give us nothing whatever of the Assyrian or Egyptian Scriptures, so interesting both in themselves, and for their influence directly upon Judaism and indirectly upon Christianity. Of course I am well aware that these *lacunæ* are, to some small extent, filled by other publications of competent scholars. But I am aware, too, that work of this sort is carried on in England under the gravest difficulties and the most discouraging disadvantages. It is work which requires not only special aptitudes and absolute devotion, but also wide culture and intelligent

co-operation. The reader of an English version of an Oriental text is much in the position of the eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet: "How can I understand unless some man should guide me?" We want not merely translators; we want specialists who can adduce parallel passages from untranslated texts; we want scholars—not necessarily specialists—to study and compare the whole. All this means money; and in England money is not readily forthcoming, save for the sort of study which produces money. As I glance at the backs of the forty-nine volumes of *The Sacred Books*, arranged before me while I write, I am struck—how can I help being so?—by the significant fact that so many who have worked on them are foreigners. Englishmen, too, can do this work, as certain great names—for example, Colebrooke, Prinsep, Rawlinson, to speak only of the departed—sufficiently show; and, when they do it they usually display a special breadth of view and width of culture. But it is not too much to say that no provision exists in England for training in these studies. In the other capitals of Europe great Oriental schools are maintained by the State at a cost of about 5000*l.* a year, and a possible career is opened for students. In Germany there are a hundred chairs of Oriental subjects, against about half a dozen in England and Scotland. But it may be said, "Is there not, then, an Oriental school in London?" Yes, London possesses an Oriental school, in which the professors are actually unpaid,

and have to escape death by starvation as best they can. I use these words advisedly. It is within my personal knowledge that they sometimes come perilously near it. Could anything be less business-like, less efficient? Apart from their commercial value—which is understood abroad—Oriental studies possess also a human value; for the history of the East is the history of ideas, is the history of civilisation; and, what appeals more strongly to the British public, they possess a political value of a very important kind. On this last point let me quote the words of one who speaks with peculiar authority. In the course of his address at the anniversary meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1898, Lord Reay observed:—

“If we consider our relations with India and with the East, I have no hesitation in saying that for us the study of Indian philology, and history, and thought is certainly not less important than that of Roman and Greek literature. What is the great need when two nations come into close contact as we do with the Eastern people? That they should thoroughly understand each other and scrupulously respect the idiosyncrasies which differentiate them. Oriental studies have the great merit of powerfully contributing to the reciprocal respect which is the basis of continuity of Empire in a country where there are so many different races represented. A philologist cannot of himself grasp or explain the authors—the authors with whom he deals—unless he gleams an idea of the environment in which these authors live, of the social condition of their contemporaries, and the mental atmosphere in which they work. Exactly the same rule applies to those who now govern India: unless they grasp the varying characteristics of the different races with

whom they are dealing, friction is inevitable as the result of blunders due to ignorance. It is impossible, therefore, to overrate the importance of the revelations which are due to Oriental research in modern times. If you are to solve the problem of present developments in the East in our own times, you cannot do so without consulting the ancient and venerable records of the past. No one is more indebted, I maintain, to Indian scholars than the statesman who feels the responsibility of ruling over Eastern nations. The neglect of Indian classics is, therefore, not merely a loss to Indian scholarship; it raises a fundamental issue with regard to our governing capacity in the East. Let me ask you whether it would be possible for anyone to govern Englishmen without any knowledge of their history, their literature, their religious convictions. If not, how do you propose to deal with nationalities, the study of whose literature, whose history, whose religion is more and more disclosing to us features of a very high order of philosophy, and an analytical conception from which we can certainly derive much profit? . . . [But] the Government of England, as it does nothing towards supplying teachers, so also for the necessary rooms, libraries, and means of publication, contributes nothing."¹

There is one more consideration to which I will advert, before I end this essay. I have touched upon the importance of those Oriental studies, to which *The Sacred Books* are so valuable a contribution, from the point of view of commerce, of politics, and of the history of civilisation. But there is yet another point of view from which they must be regarded. Of all

¹ I strongly commend the whole of Lord Reay's valuable speech, from which the above extract is taken, to the perusal of my readers. It will be found in pp. 674-679 of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for July 1898.

the great problems which occupy the minds of men, religious problems are of most universal and most abiding interest. And it is not easy to overrate the value of Oriental studies generally, and of these Sacred Books in particular, towards a better apprehension of some of the deepest of those problems. "Ex Oriente lux" we may truly say in this connexion. The discovery—we may so call it—of Sanskrit was the starting-point of the science of philology by the application of the comparative method. The discovery of the great religions, whose authoritative documents are enshrined in the Sanskrit tongue, and in the other ancient tongues of the East, has been the starting-point of the science of religion. In this domain, too, it is now discerned, the comparative method is the key to that new knowledge which is gradually, but most surely, supplanting the ancient conjectures. Here, too, the scientific spirit has penetrated—the spirit of accurate investigation and rigid deduction; the spirit embodied in the maxim, "Neque ridere, neque flere, nec detestari, sed intelligere." But on this subject let us hear Max Müller who, with whatever reservations we may receive his words, speaks with the authority of a master.

"The historical study of language soon led to a genealogical classification of the principal languages of the world, in which Hebrew received at last its right place by the side of other Semitic dialects; while the question of the origin of language assumed an altogether new form, viz., what is the origin of roots and radical concepts in every one of the great families of human speech? By following the example of the

science of language, the students of the science of religion have arrived at very similar results. Instead of approaching the religions of the world with the preconceived idea that they are either corruptions of the Jewish religion, or descended, in common with the Jewish religion, from some perfect primeval revelation, they have seen that it is their duty first to collect all the evidence of the early history of religious thought that is still accessible in the sacred books of the world, or in the mythology, customs, and even in the languages of various races. Afterwards they have undertaken a genealogical classification of all the materials that have hitherto been collected, and they have then only approached the question of the origin of religion in a new spirit by trying to find out how the roots of the various religions, the radical concepts which form their foundation, and, before all, the concept of the Infinite, could have been developed, taking for granted nothing but sensuous perception on one side, and the world by which we are surrounded on the other."¹

Now of this science of religion it is not too much to regard Max Müller as the founder. The greatest of Indian rulers, indeed, the Emperor Akbar, did, perhaps, dimly discern its possibility. At all events he apprehended the cardinal truth that in the investigation of religions the comparative method should be followed. But the time was not then ripe for pursuing it. Professor Hardy was well warranted when he said, in his inaugural address to the University of Freiburg (1887), that "the general comparative science of religion (die allgemeine vergleichende Wissenschaft) dates from Max Müller's great undertaking—the translation of *The Sacred Books*."

¹ Lectures on the *Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 262.

An Englishman is nothing if not practical; and we may be asked, What are the achievements of this new science? Here, only three can be touched upon, and that in scantiest outline. In the first place, it has thrown a flood of light upon the real origin of religions, and has made an end of the dream-and-ghost hypothesis which we were called upon by Mr. Herbert Spencer to receive and believe under pain, so to speak, of intellectual reprobation. That hypothesis is a perfectly baseless figment, *doctrinaire* in the worst sense of the word. Historical investigation is fatal to it. No one who is not theory-blind—a very common form of blindness—can study the documents brought before us in *The Sacred Books* without finding overwhelming evidence that a very different origin must be assigned to religion. It is perfectly clear that the religious sentiment in man was first awakened by the great objects of nature, especially the sun; that its root is in the feeling after, and of, the Infinite. “Awakened” we say: it was there in the human heart, like other sentiments and emotions which are part and parcel of our nature, which are common to all mankind. For, as Waitz truly observes in his *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, “there is no specific difference between men in respect of their spiritual life” (in Rücksicht ihres geistigen Lebens). The dream-and-ghost theory, founded on the doubtful beliefs of savage tribes, is opposed to the lessons derivable from the religions of the great families of the earth, as history reveals them.

As the science of religion throws a flood of light upon the origin of religions, so also does it enable us accurately to apprehend their growth. Religions produce dogmas naturally, just as trees produce flowers and fruits. Religion exists indeed in the state of emotion, sentiment, vital instinct, before it translates itself into rational notions, and into ritual which is the outward visible sign of those notions. But such translation is bound to come. Dogmas are to religion what words are to thought. And they are not dead things. They have a life of their own. They develop by a silent and irresistible growth, "*occulto velut arbor ævo.*" Their evolution is rendered necessary by the laws of history. Like words, they are living organisms, and are in continual transformation. It is not that any truth which they symbolise changes. No, it is that our apprehension of that truth changes. There are two elements in a dogma, one mystical and practical, the other intellectual and theoretic, and these elements are bound up together, not artificially, but naturally and organically. Again, a dogma is like an algebraic formula which represents ideally a given quantity, but is not that quantity itself. The intellectual experience is the symbolic expression of the religious experience, nothing more. It is no new thing which I am now writing. St. Augustine, St. Athanasius, St. Thomas Aquinas, Butler, Newman—to name no others—lay it down that theology is an economy, that is to say, a parable, or exhibition of the truth in symbols. We shall do well to remember this. It has a most

important bearing upon a multitude of religious questions often discussed with equal literalism by those who affirm and by those who deny. Now—for this is my present point—*The Sacred Books* offer invaluable help for studying the growth of religion, as has been well insisted on by Max Müller in his *Hibbert Lectures*.

“No country can be compared to India as offering opportunities for a real study of the genesis and growth of religion. I say intentionally for the growth, not for the history of religion; for history, in the ordinary sense of the word, is almost unknown in India literature. But what we can watch and study in India better than anywhere else is, how religious thoughts and religious language . . . gain force, how they spread, changing their forms as they pass from mouth to mouth, from mind to mind, yet always retaining some faint contiguity with the spring from which they rose at first. I do not think therefore that I am exaggerating when I say that the Sacred Books of India offer for a study of religion in general, and particularly for the study of the origin and growth of religion, the same peculiar and unexpected advantages which the language of India, Sanskrit, has offered for the study of the origin and growth of human speech.”

Once more, the science of religion has made—or should have made—an end of what may be called the sectarian view of religion, the view tersely expressed by Mr. Thwackum in Fielding’s inimitable novel: “When I mention religion, I mean the Christian religion; and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion; and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England.” Perhaps the latest work of any considerable pretensions written from this point of

view—a valuable work it is, in many respects—is the late Archdeacon Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters*. If the learned author were now alive, he would probably handle his subject very differently. It is one of Laurencè Oliphant's sharp sayings, that the only monopoly of which any religion can boast, is a monopoly of the errors peculiar to itself. Whether or no we adopt this dictum, certain it is that no religion that exists, or ever has existed, can claim to be in exclusive possession of religious truth. Cardinal Newman, in the first book¹ which he wrote, expressed this verity in emphatic language: "Revelation, properly speaking, is an universal, not a partial gift. It would seem that there is something true, and divinely revealed, in every religion, all over the earth; overloaded as it may be, and, at times, even stifled, by the impieties which the corrupt will and understanding of men have incorporated with it." Somewhat to the like effect Max Müller, writing, of course, from a different point of view, observes, in words which end the Preface to his great undertaking, "In these Sacred Books there is much which we should tolerate no longer, though we must not forget that there are portions in our own Sacred Books too which many of us would wish to be absent. . . . [But] there is no lesson which at the present time seems more important than to learn that we must draw in every religion a broad

¹ His *History of the Arians*. Writing to me in 1882 (the letter will be found in my volume *Essays and Speeches*, p. 94), he says, referring to this passage, "I hold it as strongly as I did fifty years ago, when it was written."

distinction between what is essential and what is not, between the eternal and the temporary, between the divine and the human ; and that though the non-essential may fill many volumes, the essential can often be comprehended in a few words, but words on which "hang all the law and the prophets."

II

The Message of Buddhism to the Western World

(I)

Nor the least of the debts which we owe to that wonderful nineteenth century may be summed up in the words "The thoughts of men are widened." And nowhere is this widening more eminently seen than in our historical conceptions. A hundred years ago that division of the annals of the human race into ancient and modern history, against which Freeman so strongly protested, was quite unquestioned. Ancient history meant an uncritical account of the career and fortunes of Greeks, Romans, and Jews, with scattered notices of tribes brought into contact with the Jews. The growth and expansion of the European races professing Christianity was the special subject of modern history. As to the rest of the inhabited globe, it is not too much to say that darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people. Mankind was distributed into Christians—Catholic, Greek, and Protestant—Jews, Mohammedans, and Pagans of whom

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the sufficient account was that they worshipped idols. Even Lamennais, in expounding the philosophical system set forth in his *Essay on Indifference*—the first volume of which was published in 1818—quite lost sight of two-thirds of the human 'race whose creeds and cults did not square with his theory. He knew, of course, that they and their religions had existed long before the Christian era; and were still existing. Beyond that he knew nothing of them and their religions; nor did his ignorance trouble him. It did not occur to him that their modes of faith possessed any importance, or even significance, in the world's spiritual history. They were for him a negligible quantity.

Now, all that is changed. What Professor Rhys Davids has happily called "the veil of ignorance separating East and West" has been lifted. The civilisations of the Oriental world have been revealed to us, and have been patiently and scientifically studied. I spoke just now of such studies as being specially the achievement of the nineteenth century; but we should not forget that for the pioneer of them we must go back to the eighteenth. As we saw in the preceding essay,¹ it was in 1750 that Anquetil Duperron began, in almost hopeless conditions, the work which was to make accessible to us The Sacred Books of India—those treasure-houses of the religions and philosophies of what we must account the eldest branch of the great Aryan family.

¹ See p. 29.

(II)

The opening up of this long-hidden Eastern world of thought has been quaintly likened to the vast astronomical revelations specially associated with the name of Copernicus. It has been said that as he unveiled to us new heavens, so Anquetil Duperron has unveiled to us a new earth. Schopenhauer's prediction,¹ "Indian wisdom will flow back upon Europe, and will produce a thorough change in our knowledge and thought," has already received a certain fulfilment. Perhaps, on the whole, the most important part of this veritable *Aufklärung* has been the discovery of Buddhism. The word "discovery" must not, indeed, be taken too literally, or pressed too hard. Even in the middle ages Marco Polo had heard of the Buddha, and wrote of him "Had he been a Christian, he would have been a great Saint of our Lord Jesus Christ, so holy and pure was the life he led." But, we, in these latter days, have more than heard of him. The Sacred Books containing the most authentic account of his life and teaching have been translated by competent scholars, and we see his benign and gentle figure, as he wandered for forty-five years up and down the region watered by the Ganges: we listen to the "good and wise words"² which fell upon the ears of his disciples in that far-off age. Of

¹ See p. 14.

² "He never spake but good and wise words; he was the Light of the World."—*Lament of the Disciples on the death of the Buddha.*

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course the teeming imagination of the East has embellished his story with countless legends. That was inevitable. Archdeacon Wilson has well observed—the dictum gave great offence when it was uttered, but now sounds like a truism—“Modern criticism is well-nigh unanimous in saying that an atmosphere of the miraculous is an inseparable accompaniment of the profound reverence with which a great Teacher and Prophet and Saint is regarded by his followers, and the necessary literary form in which such reverence would express itself.” But through “the mists of fabling time” the man and his message stand out clear. His personality is quite unaffected by the magical attributes which popular devotion has attached to it. It is truly said in Mr. Fielding’s fascinating book, *The Soul of a People*, “If every supernatural occurrence were wiped out of the chronicles of the faith, Buddhism would, even to the least understanding of its followers, remain exactly where it is. Not one jot or tittle of it would suffer in the authority of its teaching.” I add that the modern critic is not bound, or rather, is not entitled, to judge harshly the pious writers who did not conform to, who did not know of, our canons of historical accuracy. Edification was for them the standard of credibility. They described not the Buddha of real life, but the Buddha as he appeared to the hearts of his followers, though they were, probably, quite unconscious of such an antithesis.

According to the most approved chronology, it is to the sixth century before our era that we must go for the beginnings of this religion, destined, before a

thousand years had passed away, to subdue in the East vaster regions than those conquered by Christianity in the West, and to be the minister of the moral law to an exceeding great multitude of our race, far outnumbering those who name the name of Christ. It was a great century in the world's history: a century of what Schiller calls *weitschicht'ge Dinge*¹—"far-reaching things"—in Rome and in Hellas, in Babylonia and in Egypt, in China and in Judæa. But of these things Gotama had no knowledge. Nay, the very names of all those countries were, most probably, quite unknown to him. His mental horizon was bounded by the Himalaya Mountains, under whose shadow he dwelt. Legend represents him as the eldest son of a mighty King, and luxuriates in descriptions of the magnificence of his early surroundings. In truth, his father Suddodhāna was the Rāja of the Sākya,² a not very considerable Aryan tribe, seated at a place then called Kapila-vastu, now Kohama, about a hundred miles nearly due north of Benares. His mother, Māya, died soon after his birth, and he became an object of affectionate solicitude to her childless sister, his father's other wife, and received the usual education of a Hindu noble. He was early married to his cousin Yasodharā, who in his twentieth year bore him a son, Rāhula. The birth of this child was a turning-point in his life. A Hindu of the

¹ "Weitschicht'ge Dinge sind im Werk und Werden."—*Wilhelm Tell*.

² Hence the name by which he is sometimes known as Sākya-Muni, the Sage of the Sākyas.

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Hindus, his mind had from early youth been busy with the metaphysical and religious problems so dear to his countrymen. In particular, he meditated much on the sadness, the suffering, the multiform woe of, which life is full till it culminates in decay and dissolution, and that old question of the origin of evil—*Unde malum?* as St. Augustine puts it—was ever present to him. “The burden and the mystery of all this unintelligible world” pressed upon him with ever-increasing severity. And the longing grew ever stronger and stronger within him for the calm of the silent life in which, as a religious ascetic, he might give himself up wholly to the search for light. The announcement of the birth of his son brought him to the dividing of the ways. Now or never must he forsake all and follow whither the inner voice called him. “That is a new and a strong tie which I shall have to break,” he said, and a sign, which he was not slow to interpret, was given him. As he directed his course to his house, amid the rejoicings of his clansmen, this stanza, sung by a young girl, fell on his ear: “Happy the father, happy the mother, happy the wife of such a son and husband.” But the Pāli word for happy, “*nibabuta*,” also means “freed.” It was to him what the “*Tolle et lege*” was to St. Augustine. “Freed,” it seemed to say, “from suffering and sorrow and shadows.” He took a chain of pearls from his neck and sent it to the singer, who fondly imagined it a love token. Far other thoughts were in his mind. At midnight he arose, went to the door of his wife’s chamber and saw her sleeping, surrounded with flowers,

and resting one hand on her baby's head. He had wished to take his son in his arms for a last embrace: but the fear of waking the young mother withheld him. He turned away and fled into the night.

This is what the Buddhists call "The Great Renunciation," and there is no reason for doubting the substantial accuracy of the story. As little is there for questioning the account of the workings of his mind in his new life as a wandering, homeless ascetic. For six years he abode in the desert of Uruvelā, giving himself up to the severest penance: seeking mental conquest through bodily suppression. Then, in the watches of that great night spent under the Sacred Bo-tree—subsequently to become to Buddhists what the Cross is to Christians—the knowledge came which should enable him to solve "the riddle of this painful earth": he attained, as the Buddhist writers put it, the supreme intelligence: he became the Buddha.¹ It is related that he spent the next forty days after this event in an ecstasy of meditation. But pity filled his heart for the "purblind race of miserable men," and impelled him to publish to them "the most excellent law" which had been revealed to him. Love of his brethren constrained him. Woe unto him if he preached not his gospel! He set out for Benares on his first evangelical journey, and there, in the Deer Park, delivered his sermon on *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, which is to Buddhists what the *Sermon on the Mount* is to Christians. It is a document which will well repay perusal, but my space

¹ i.e., The Enlightened, The All-knowing.

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will not allow me to quote it here. I must, however, briefly exhibit the fundamental positions of the teaching imparted in it.

Its essence, we may say, will be found in the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. The Four Noble Truths are concerning suffering, concerning the cause of suffering, concerning the destruction of suffering, and concerning the way which leads to the destruction of suffering. Pain, the Buddha held—if we may put his thought into modern language—results from existence as an individual: craving—*tanhā* is the Pāli word—for the gratification of the passions, for a future life, for success in this life, is the origin of suffering: the getting rid of, the being free from this craving is the destruction of suffering: and the Noble Eightfold Path, which leads to the destruction of suffering, is Right Views, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Contemplation. It is this Noble Eightfold Path “which opens the eyes, which bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to *Nirvāna*,” when those free from passion, having “put an end to transmigration, will no more undergo birth and decay.” “The Noble Eightfold Path,” a recent writer explains, “is a Path of Self-Conquest and Self-Enlightenment. The First and Second Steps are stages of preparation; the mind is purged of its false hopes and fears, its egoistic opinions and ungrounded beliefs, and aspiration for the good, the true, the enduring, is generated and fostered. The Third and

Fourth Steps are stages of Practice in *Right Doing*. The intense reaching upward of the mind towards the pure, the pitiful, the gentle-hearted and the true, leads at last to the putting into actual practice of purity, pitifulness, gentleness, and truthfulness; and so all that is not in harmony with these sublime conditions is gradually eliminated from the character, and pure thoughts and holy actions become habitual. The Fifth Step is a step of *poise*, of *happiness*, which comes as a result of long self-control, of faithfulness, and persisting in the pursuit of virtue. It is the period in which holy power is gathered and subverted. The Sixth and Seventh Steps are states of definitely directed power, and wisely ordered intelligence. The Eighth Step is *Perfect Peace*, the fruit of a perfectly ordered life. Such is the Noble Eightfold Path, the end of which is Supreme Enlightenment, the consummation of which is emancipation from the thralldom of Self."¹

(III)

It is a sagacious saying of Max Müller's that "all higher knowledge is gained by comparison and rests on comparison." We shall the better understand what Buddhism really is, if we view it side by side with the religion which fills, in the Western World, a place

¹ "The Noble Eightfold Path," by James Allen, in *Buddhism*, No. II., p. 217. *Buddhism*, it may be as well to explain, is a Review published in Rangoon, and may be regarded as the chief organ of the Buddhist Revival of which I shall speak presently.

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analogous to that occupied by it in the Eastern. There is, unquestionably, much in common between the character and teaching of the founders of the two religions.¹ Both are represented as infinitely pitiful and infinitely wise. Both desired, beyond all things, the salvation of mankind. Both proclaimed a royal law of love, the love of our neighbour as ourselves, the Buddha, indeed, including among the objects of our charity those poor relations of ours which we call the brute creation: "Thou shalt hurt no living thing." Both required of their disciples the forsaking of all and the following of the Master. Both taught the utter vanity of earthly good, insisted on self-denial, and exhibited compassion as the highest law of life. Both inculcated the supreme necessity of purity of thought and intention. Both prescribed the non-resistance of evil, the overcoming of evil with good. Both had especial tenderness for the young, the poor, the suffering, the outcast. In the accounts which have come down to us of the lives of both, there are the most remarkable parallelisms:² and, what is more important and significant, the personality of both must be accounted even now the strongest religious forces in the world, drawing the hearts of men by a spiritual magnetism through so many ages.

¹ This is strongly put by the late Bishop Milman. "Among heathen precursors of the truth," that excellent prelate wrote, "I feel more and more that Sākya-Muni is the nearest in character and effect to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."—*Memoir of Bishop Milman*, p. 203.

² Upon which I cannot enter here. I must refer the reader who desires to see a discussion of them to a correspondence between Cardinal Newman and Professor Rhys Davis, which took place through my intermediary, and which is published in my work, *The Claims of Christianity*.

But if the ethical teaching and spiritual influence of the Christ and the Buddha are so similar, their dogmatic teaching is as opposite as is well conceivable. Christianity is before all things theistic and animistic. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy . . . soul," is its first and great commandment. God and the soul are its two foundations. Buddhism is sometimes called atheistic. The statement requires to be guarded and explained. Buddhism recognises innumerable *devas* or gods, who, however, are of the same nature as men and animals, all existence being of one kind; and although they enjoy a period of bliss, that comes to an end, and they must at last die, and be drawn again into the whirlpool of existence. But of the All Perfect Creative Deity of Christianity, Buddhism knows nothing. It is, in the proper sense of the word, Agnostic. One of the greatest of modern religious teachers has told us, in what is perhaps the most striking passage of his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, "The being of a God is as certain to me as my own existence: [It is] the great truth of which my own being is full: [but] when I look out of myself . . . the world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth." The Buddha read similarly the testimony of the external world. It was like the scroll of which the Hebrew prophet speaks, "written within and without," with "lamentations and mourning and woe." That, he discerned, is the lot of all living things. Of course he did not know what we know, that the numberless ages preceding the appearance of man on this planet were full of the same multiform

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monotonous misery : that hunger and terror, violence and agony, disease and death have reigned in the land, the air, the ocean, ever since they have been tenanted by sentient beings. But what he did know—what he saw around him—seemed to him, as to Newman, “a vision to dizzy and appal :” a condition of things “so fearfully yet exactly described in the words ‘having no hope and without God in the world.’” And if he turned within, he did not find the revelation of the Divine Noumenon which was to Newman the light of life. He did, indeed, find “the Voice speaking so clearly in Conscience,” of which Newman tells us. But it did not speak to him as to Newman, of “a Supreme Governor, a Judge—holy, just, powerful, all seeing, retributive.” The moral law, written “on the fleshy tables of the heart,” he apprehended, confessed and revered. It was for him the highest and ultimate fact beyond which he could not go. And he was well aware that the very idea of law implies a penal sanction : a law which may be broken with impunity is no law at all : justice is, of its nature, vindictive. It was this truth which led the great Prophet of Righteousness, in these latter times, to conclude from the moral law to a life beyond the phenomenal, where its triumphs will be assured, its rewards and penalties adequately realised. But the Buddha, nurtured in other traditions than Kant, did not draw that conclusion. The doctrine of Transmigration was undoubtingly received and believed throughout India in his time : a certain amount of evidence may be adduced for it : it is incapable of

disproof: he saw no reason for questioning it: and he found in it the sanction and the instrument of the Law of Righteousness ruling throughout the universe.

"Transmigration." The word must make us pause. It is quite certain that the Buddha did not recognise the existence of what we call a soul¹: a never-dying tenant of this fleshly tabernacle, directly created by Divine power—such is the teaching of the most accredited school of Christian theologians—to animate every human embryo which comes into existence. The Buddha held belief in this soul, this permanent immortal self, to be an illusion which dims our intelligence, and is the source of all selfishness. One of his primary positions is the doctrine of impermanence, of the perpetual flux of things, and that in a deeper sense than the *ρᾶν τὰ πάντα* of Heraclitus. "Transient are all the elements of being," he taught his disciples. Of being he conceived, indeed, as becoming: "it is" meant for him "it is process, or a group of processes:" for all things that exist are composite: they are aggregates, and are ever changing: the physical organism is not the same for two consecutive minutes: consciousness, the mind—a mere collection of faculties or tendencies (*Sankhāras*)—is even less stable. What is it, then, which transmigrates? It is *Karma*, the doing of each individual, the net result of his merits and demerits. It is this *Karma*, surviving the disruption of the mind which wrought it—we might almost call it Character—which creatively shapes every being's

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destiny. A god, a man, a beast, a bird, or a fish—for there is no essential distinction between them—is the product of the good and evil deeds done in previous existences: the deeds, yes, or rather the thoughts of which those deeds were the outcome. “All that we are,” is the saying of the Buddha, “is the result of what we have thought, is founded on our thoughts, is built up of our thoughts.” Thus life, in all its grades, from the highest to the lowest, is a period of probation. “Two things in this world are immutably fixed,” he declared on another occasion, “that good actions bring happiness, and that bad actions bring misery.” And, in the pregnant Buddhist phrase, “a man passes away according to his deeds,” to be reborn as a god in heaven, as man or animal on earth, as man in hell, as his *Karma* merits. To say that what a man sows here he shall reap hereafter falls far short of this tremendous doctrine. His works *are* himself: he *is* what he has sown. All passes away from him at death except *Karma*. Thus do his deeds follow him from afar, through his innumerable past existences: and thus will they follow him through innumerable future existences, unless he root out that craving (*tanhā*) which, as we saw just now, is the cause of separate existence with its suffering and sorrow, by walking in the Eightfold Path of Holiness. If he thus conquer himself, there will be no further ground for rebirth: Karma will be extinguished: Nirvāna will be reached. Those who have attained to this peace which passeth understanding, even the gods envy, we are told. As we read in one

of the Pāli Scriptures—the *Ratana Sutta*—"Their hearts are free from longing for a future life: the cause of their existence being destroyed, and no new yearnings springing up within them, they, the wise, are extinguished like this lamp."

Perhaps enough has been said to indicate how fundamentally opposed are the speculative bases of Christianity and Buddhism. In Buddhism there is no theology, or science of God, because there is no Theistic Noumenon: consequently the idea of grace as a Divine influence, the idea of prayer as a means of access to the Divine, are not found in it. Nor do the words, "salvation," "immortality," "sin"—or rather the Oriental words which we so translate—signify to Buddhists what they signify to us. For them, "salvation" means the elimination of craving and desire and the delusion of self; "immortality" deliverance from the load of death called life, or as the *Sutta Nipata* puts it, "not going to rebirth"; and "sin," not an offence against the Creator and Judge of men, who has no place in their system, but ignorance; culpable indeed, as resulting from our "not knowing and not understanding"—in the Buddha's words—when we might and should know and understand; and therefore necessarily bringing suffering in its train. St. Paul's doctrine of the two Adams, in the first of whom all died, while in the second all shall be made alive, is utterly remote from the Buddhist mind. Of course the second Adam was born into this world five centuries after the Buddha had left it, and of the first he had never heard; but,

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apart from that, the ideas of original sin and of *imputed righteousness* would both have been incredible to him. It is curious that while so emphatically repudiating the existence of a soul, he teaches the extremest individualism. He held that every man is wholly responsible for what he is and for what he does, and must himself work out his own salvation.

I add that Buddhism is not a Church in our sense of the word. The work of the Buddha, during the well-nigh fifty years of his preaching and teaching, was to formulate his doctrine and to found his mendicant order—the *Sangha*—under a rule which he prescribed, and by which his monks, sometimes improperly called priests, still live. The Christ in the three years of His public ministry, merely left us logia of axiomatic mysticism, subsequently to be incorporated in the Gospels, and gathered around Him disciples who were regarded as a Jewish sect for thirteen years after His departure from them. Then, at Antioch, they were first called Christians, and there appears, in embryonic outline, the figure of the Church to come: the vast ecclesiastical organisation which was to arise on the ruins of Imperial Rome, and to crush out its various cults. Buddhism never became an ecclesiastical organisation. Nor did it ever aim at supplanting the religions of the countries into which it spread. It suffered them gladly, so far as they were not unethical, content to indoctrinate their professors with its own spirit.¹ A recent writer observes

¹ The only five precepts obligatory on Buddhist laymen are (1) not to kill: (2) not to steal: (3) not to commit adultery: (4) not to lie: (5) not to drink intoxicating things.

"The Buddha denounced no religion: in all things he recognised the result of the workers, thinkers and actors of former days: he knew that every particle of every existing thing had been ages in forming."¹ Whether the Buddha possessed the knowledge thus attributed to him, I do not undertake to say. But, unquestionably, universal tolerance is a great note of Buddhism.

(IV)

This in compressed, but, as I trust, sufficient outline, is the Gospel of the Buddha. We need not here follow it in its conquering march through India, Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, Thibet, China, and Japan. But I may observe that, like Christianity, its progress was greatly facilitated by the political changes which took place in the centuries immediately succeeding the death of its author. The formation and consolidation of the Roman Empire prepared the way for the triumph of the religion of Christ throughout the regions comprehended in it. The work of Constantine would have been impossible without the work of Julius Cæsar. The ultimate effect upon Buddhism of Alexander's irruption into India was very similar. It led to the formation of great Indian States under Indian monarchs; and thus prepared the way for the vast Maurya Empire, which was so largely instrumental in spreading the religion of the Buddha. It

¹ *Buddhism* Vol. I., p. 91.

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is curious and significant that to the early Buddhists India was "the world," just as the Roman Empire—*ἡ οἰκουμένη*—was to the early Christians. Asoka, like Constantine, was revered as an universal monarch; and the Council of Patna, held under his protection, and probably by his desire, in the eighteenth year of his reign (B.C. 250), was, to say the least, of as much importance in the history of Buddhism as was the Council of Nicea, held nearly six centuries later, in the history of Christianity. The Edict addressed by him to the thousand Fathers there assembled still exists. The voice of the great Hindu Emperor speaks to us from his sculptured rocks and pillars. At the close of that Council, missionaries were sent forth to nine different regions, the names of some of which it is now difficult to identify: and it is notable that the Buddhist monk and nun who went to Lankā (Ceylon), as pioneers of the new faith, were a son and a daughter of Asoka.

The causes which led to the reception of Buddhism by the populations of the vast regions which it entered do not seem very difficult to understand. In the first place it appealed strongly to the sense of justice innate in man: to his moral sense. Its teaching that every being necessarily receives, by virtue of law eternal, immutable, supreme throughout the universe, the exact reward or punishment merited by that being's deeds—that every good or bad act, or thought, however trifling, is weighed in the inerrant balance of Karma—is singularly impressive to the natural conscience. Then the noble and self-denying lives of

The Two Vehicles

the monks—the Buddhist *Saṅgha*—who, like their founder, forsook all to preach his “most excellent law,” were more eloquent than any sermons. Again, the social character of the Buddhist religious assemblies was unquestionably attractive. And, as I have already intimated, the singularly winning personality of the Buddha himself was potent to draw the hearts of men: and still is. Of course Buddhism assumed widely different shapes in the widely differing races which received it. There is a profound dictum of Schopenhauer, “Men need absolutely some interpretation of life; and it must be interpreted in proportion to the power of their intellect:” a truth stated, indeed, more succinctly and more generally by Aquinas, “Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur.” Professor Rhys Davids notes that “Buddhism varies, through slight degrees, as the centuries pass by, in almost every book.” We might of course say the same of all living religions. In the world of ideas, as elsewhere, vitality means change. The great division in Buddhism, as, perhaps, I need hardly observe, is between what is known as the Lesser Vehicle (*Hīnayāna*) and the Greater Vehicle (*Mahāyāna*), the word “Vehicle” signifying the way of salvation: the way of passing out of the endless ocean of transmigration to the haven of Nirvāṇa. The Lesser Vehicle, which unquestionably represents the more primitive form of the religion, and of which the language in the older period is exclusively Pāli, prevails in Ceylon, Burmah, and Siam; the Greater Vehicle, in China, Nepāl, Bhutan, Mongolia, Korea,

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Japan and Thibet, its Sacred Books being in Sanskrit. The chief difference between the two schools may be thus briefly stated. The central ideal of the Lesser Vehicle is the Arahatsip, or the attainment of Nirvāna in this life, by self-culture and self-control—a consummation to be realised by man alone without any supernatural aid ; for the Buddha, although the greatest of beings, and revered as such, merely helps by the example and the teaching which he has left us. The central ideal of the Greater Vehicle is Bodhisatship, which involves a series of re-births for Æons, and the attainment, in some future life of Buddhahood. Moreover, it has added to the Buddha's teaching concerning Nirvāna, a doctrine of a Western Paradise, and has introduced animistic and transcendental views unwarranted by, and, indeed, repugnant to the Pāli Scriptures. It is, of course, in Thibet that the religion of the Buddha has undergone the strangest transformation. There, belief in a being called the Ādi-Buddha, infinite, self-existing, and omniscient, obtains, and the Spirit of the Buddha is supposed to be specially incarnate in the Delai-Lāma, who is the centre of a system of superstitious dogma and gorgeous ritual.

But it is not necessary here to enlarge further on this subject, or to speak of the numerous philosophical sects which sprang up among Buddhists. * Thirteen, it is reckoned, arose in China during the first thousand years of our era, or, including Llamism, fourteen ; twelve exist at the present day in Japan. Indeed, it would be no easy matter to speak of them intelligibly,

for, as a learned Japanese writer truly tells us, "The technical terms of Buddhism represent ideas so original, so remote from Western thought, that it is impossible to find exact equivalents for them in European languages."¹ Nor, again, is it worth while to dwell upon the vast difference which exists, in every Buddhist country, between the philosophical and the popular conceptions of the Buddha's teaching. "A people's religion is ever a corrupt religion," Cardinal Newman has pregnantly observed. How should it be anything else? For example, can it be reasonably expected that the untutored mind will grasp, with real apprehension, so difficult a doctrine as that of Karma? "The people," writes Mr. Hearn—he is speaking of Japan, but his words apply to other Buddhist countries—"hold to a simpler creed of a veritable transmigration of souls. They understand Karma only as the law that makes the punishment or reward of faults committed in their previous lives. The people do not trouble themselves about Nirvāna, but they think much about heaven (Gokuraku), which the members of many sects believe can be attained immediately after this life by the spirits of the good."² "For the common people Self exists: it is a real though multiple personality that passes from birth to birth. Only the educated Buddhist understands that what we imagine to be Self is wholly illusion—a darkening veil woven by Karma."³

¹ Fujishima.—*Le Bouddhisme Japonais*, Int., p. ii.

² *Gleanings in Buddha Fields*, p. 240.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 136. Fujishima claims for Buddhism "the glorious title of

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No doubt, as has been suggested in an earlier page, one secret of the marvellous success of Buddhism—"that Protean creed," Bishop Bigandet calls it—is to be found in its power of accommodating itself to the minds and ways of the populations that received it. For example, its vast conquests have all been made among ancestor worshipping races. And neither in India, or China, or Korea, in Siam, or Burmah, or Japan, did it attempt to extinguish that cult. It is open to little doubt that the Jesuits in their Japanese mission, as in their Chinese, endeavoured to imitate this tolerant policy. Certainly they might have adduced in support of it the practice of St. Paul, who became to the Jews as a Jew that he might gain the Jews, and to them that were without law, as without law, and was made all things to all men, that he might, by all means, save some. And it seems most probable that ill-judged interference with the "wise and gentle minimism" of those devoted men, was largely responsible for the sanguinary persecution in which their work was extinguished. Unquestionably, all Buddhist peoples have more or less preserved their indigenous religions. Burmese and Siamese Buddhists revere their "deos agrestes," the Nats; Chinese Buddhists do not disdain to bow the knee in Confucian and Tāoist temples; traces of Hindu practices and beliefs appear among the Buddhists of Ceylon; the Buddhists of Thibet are penetrated by shamanistic notions; in

universal religion, because it suits the highest as well as the lowest classes, the one finding there the religion of intelligence, the other the religion of sentiment."—Int., p. xi.

every Buddhist house in Japan, side by side with the Buddhist shrine, is found the godshelf on which are tablets inscribed with assurances of the protection of the Shinto divinities ; nay, more, the Sun, "the August One," is adored by most Japanese Buddhists, not only as the Imperial ancestor, but also as the great source and fount of terrestrial life. The truth is, there is really one sole dogma of Buddhism—that the whole universe is under one and the self-same law of causation which is ethical. That, it regards as the root of the matter ; and so long as men hold fast to this prime verity, it views with indulgence the superfluous beliefs—*Aberglaube*,¹ as the Germans say—in which they are led to indulge, by circumstances of place and time. To borrow and adapt the words of Cardinal Newman, "Taking human nature as it is, and considering how feeble and confused is the ethical intelligence of the world at large," Buddhism is ever ready to "concede a little superstition as not the worst of evils, if it be the price of making sure of faith." What is certain is this, that the religion of Buddha, however mixed with baser elements, has raised vastly in the moral scale of being the peoples which have received it. Thus, it redeemed the Burmese and the Siamese from the foul idolatries still existing among the wilder Karens, Chins, and other hill tribes. It lifted the Singhalese, given over to animistic superstitions, to a higher level of thought and feeling. It augmented the immemorial

¹ Wundt (*Vorlesungen über die Menschen- und Thierseele*, No. 28) insists that the *Glaube* of to-day is the *Aberglaube* of to-morrow, and enlarges, *more suo*, on this theme through a dozen pages.

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civilisation of China, appealing, by its elements of mysticism and asceticism, to spiritual instincts which the mere Utilitarianism or Positivism or Secularism—call it what you will—of Confucius failed to satisfy. It tamed and civilised the barbarous tribes of demon worshippers which it found in Thibet. "Its influence upon Japanese civilisation," Mr. Hearn has observed, "was immense, profound, multiform, incalculable. In the highest meaning of the term, it was a civilising power. Besides teaching new respect for life, the duty of kindness to animals as well as to all human beings, the consequence of present acts upon the conditions of a future existence, the duty of resignation to pain as the inevitable result of forgotten error, it actually gave to Japan the arts and industries of China. Architecture, painting, sculpture, engraving, gardening—in short, every art and industry that helped to make life beautiful—developed first in Japan under Buddhist teaching."¹ "The mental soil of the race has been saturated and fertilised by Buddhist ideals."² A recent writer has spoken of "the spiritual impotence of Buddhism." The phrase is singularly unhappy. This religion everywhere quickened into spiritual life the nations taught by it, from the steppes of Tartary to the palm-groves of Ceylon. And even now Mongols, Singhalese, Burmese, Siamese, Chinese, and Japanese witness to the enthusiasm of its first missionaries and to the power of the personality of its founder. Nay, we may say the same even of the people among

¹ *Japan: an Interpretation*, p. 207.

² *Gleanings in Buddha-Fields*, p. 185.

whom it has been most thoroughly travestied, and most deeply degraded. How significant is the account given by Sir Frank Younghusband of the valedictory visit at which the Regent of Tibet presented to him an image of the Buddha with these words: "When Buddhists look on this, they put aside thoughts of strife, and think only of peace; and I hope that you, when you look on it, will think kindly of Tibet."

(V)

For a thousand years there has been a cessation of Buddhist propagandism; and in writing of this religion some two decades ago, I was led to observe that it "seemed to exhibit little of that missionary activity which is perhaps the most infallible sign of religious vitality."¹ We could not say that now. During the last ten or twelve years, it has given striking evidence that its power of life and growth is by no means exhausted. Contact with Western civilisation has been unquestionably a chief cause of this revival. The attacks made upon it by Christian evangelists have aroused its more earnest and instructed votaries to seek, and to set forth a reason for the faith which is in them, and to subject the claims of Christianity to a searching criticism, often extremely disconcerting to the divines, not, as a rule, specially well equipped, who essay their conversion. This has been notably so in Japan, Ceylon, and Burmah. In all those countries

¹ *Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*, p. 162.

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the Buddhist clergy have shaken off the torpor engendered by a thousand years of peaceful routine ; Buddhist colleges and schools and societies of all kinds have been multiplied ; and a new Buddhist literature, chiefly in English, has been called into existence. One principal aim of that literature, Mr. Cobbold has pointed out, in his interesting and candid work, is "a statement of the doctrines of Buddhism in such terms as to place it in accordance with modern systems of philosophy";¹ certainly—as we shall presently see—a by no means difficult task. Foremost among the labourers in this cause must be mentioned the late Mr. Lafcadio Hearn, whose fascinating books have done so much to reveal to us the civilisation of Japan. But perhaps the most noteworthy token of the Buddhist revival is an illustrated magazine, called *Buddhism*, which was started in Rangoon in 1903. It is noteworthy for the great ability, entire honesty, and deep convictions which are everywhere conspicuous in its pages. It is noteworthy, too, as being the first-fruits of the renaissance of the religion of the Buddha in a country permeated by the spirit of his teaching ; a country the people of which, as Mr. Fielding says, in his work already mentioned, "are so kind-hearted, so hospitable, so charitable both in act and thought ;" where, as Bishop Bigandet testifies,² they are pervaded by "strong religious sentiment," and "firm faith," the monastic order, living in the strictest poverty and purity, being merely the higher expression of the life

¹ *Religion in Japan*, p. 209.

² *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, vol. ii., p. 271.

of the people, from whom it springs directly, and by whom it is "voluntarily and cheerfully" supported.

(VI)

Not one of the least curious and significant features of the Buddhist renaissance is the sense of a mission to the Western world. Its pioneers have observed—how could they help it?—that the missionaries who seek to convert them to Christianity come from countries where Christianity has largely lost its hold.¹ And it appears to them that "the most excellent law" of the Buddha may well fill the spiritual void thus caused. If I understand them aright—which I have taken much pains to do—they are far from assuming an aggressive attitude towards the Christian faith. They are animated by the spirit which breathes in the twelfth of Asoka's Edicts: "There should be no praising of one's own sect, and decrying of other sects, but, on the contrary, a rendering of honour to other sects for whatever cause honour may be due to them." Those who hold Christianity, whether after the manner of Pascal, of Butler, of Newman, or after the manner of Bunyan, of Wesley, of "General" Booth, are not special objects of their solicitude. But they know perfectly well that there is

¹ "The Japanese," Mr. Cobbold writes, "are fully aware of the unbelief prevalent in England, and well acquainted with its arguments," p. 84. I can testify from my own experience in India, that the same may be said of educated Hindus; and I may be permitted to refer to an extremely interesting letter from one of them, printed at p. 165 of my work, *India and its Problems*.

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an exceeding great multitude both of highly educated and of half educated Europeans who do not hold Christianity at all: nay, who have, more or less explicitly, rejected the Theistic and animistic postulates upon which Christianity is based. A century ago Goethe asked, "Wer darf sagen ich glaub' an Gott?"—who dares to say, I believe in God? Assuredly, at the present time, a vast number, perhaps the majority of Goethe's countrymen, including, we must admit, some of the wisest and the best among them, would not dare to say so; while in France the energies of those who bear rule—and who, perhaps, can hardly be reckoned among the wisest and the best of Frenchmen—are savagely directed to the eradication of that belief from the popular mind. Possibly in these two countries Theism is more widely rejected than in the rest of Europe. But, unquestionably, everywhere in the Western world the minds of many men are clouded with a doubt concerning it. In like manner the existence of an immortal soul in man is becoming increasingly discredited under the influence of the dominant schools of modern thought. "Soul," Voltaire taught the eighteenth century, "is a vague, indefinite term for an unknown principle of effects known and felt by us," which has generally been taken for the origin or cause of life, or for life itself." The scientists whom the nineteenth century heard most gladly have been much more affirmative in negation. The so-called "soul," they insist, is a bundle of sensations, emotions, sentiments, all relating to the physical experiences of the race and the individual. Wundt,

in his well-known work, tells us "Psychology proves that not only our sense-perception, but the memorial images depend for their origin"—note the word—"upon the functionings of the organs of sense and movement," and holds that "a continuance of this sensuous consciousness must appear irreconcilable with the facts of experience." He adds, "Surely we may well doubt whether the fulfilment of the wish for it, if possible, would not be an intolerable destiny." Professor James, who is even more modern than Wundt, accounts the term "soul" a mere figure of speech to which no reality corresponds. "The word," he insists, "explains nothing and guarantees nothing; its successive thoughts are the only intelligible things about it, and definitely to ascertain the correlation of these with brain processes is as much as psychology can empirically do." Another recent writer, remarkable alike for his acuteness and his candour, meditating upon these things, makes the significant inquiry, "May we not conceive that this life is, as it were, a period of spiritual gestation; that as the germ cell produces in the future organism the qualities of the parent, so may memory gather up the manifold experiences of life, and reproduce them in a new and spiritual form, the character and fate of each individual being, according to the Karma of the *Upanishads*, the result of his acts in a former state of existence?"¹

Now it is to these lapsed Christians—"the lost sheep of the house of Israel," we may say—that Buddhism specially addresses its message. It views

¹ *The Soul: A Study and an Argument*, by David Syme, p. 199.

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them with much sympathy; their negations are in accordance with the Buddha's doctrine. But pious Buddhists know well that men and societies of men cannot live by mere negations; that an ethical basis of life is necessary to us. Their language to the "advanced" thinkers of the Western world—if I may venture to summarise it—is this: "You have cast off ancient animism, traditional Theism. You have done well. The great truths that there is no soul in man, and that man has no knowledge of an Infinite and Absolute Being, were long ago taught by the Buddha. You have grasped the fundamental fact that law rules everywhere throughout the phenomenal universe, whose secrets you have so largely explored. That is well, too. The religion of the Buddha is not in conflict with modern science; he anticipated many of its most important conclusions; its primary principle of evolution is one with his central tenet. But what is the *method* of modern science? Is it not the reduction of the phenomena of the physical universe to mathematics? The more deeply you investigate that universe, the more surely you find everywhere causation, conservation of energy—law on a scale infinitely great and infinitely little; law which taken by itself does not speak of righteousness, or make for righteousness, which is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral. We announce to you an order which is the counterpart, in the ethical and spiritual sphere, of your scientific order in the phenomenal; an order where causation and the conservation of energy equally prevail; an order which is ruled absolutely by law;

an order which is as true a reality, nay, a truer, for all phenomena are impermanent, all integrations are unstable; but the Law of Righteousness abides for ever. It is the law of the universe; not of this little earth only, but of the innumerable hundreds of thousands of myriads of kotis¹ of worlds. That is the kernel of the Buddha's teaching; it is by the proclamation of this Law of Righteousness, with its mechanism of moral retribution, called by us Karma, that he gives to life its true interpretation and indicates its real value, guiding us from Agnosticism to Gnosis. You have cast off the Christian mythology: we do not ask you to accept ours. These things belong to an age of the world when men needed to be taught as children. But the most excellent law of the Buddha is confined to no age. His doctrine of the Four Noble Truths, of the Noble Eightfold Path is as true now as when he taught it, and ever will be true. It is a doctrine which supplies a better rule of life than any other; it holds out a hope which no possible future of positive knowledge can destroy."

Such is the message of Buddhism to the Western World.² Mr. Hearn, writing with the zeal of a

¹ The vastness of the Buddhist conceptions of the universe is appalling. One koti is ten millions.

² To guard against possible—not, as I think, probable—misapprehension, I may here quote and adopt certain words of Bishop Bigandet in the preface to the first edition of his work:—"The writer had no other object in view than that of merely expounding the religious system of Buddhism as it is, explaining its doctrines and practices as correctly as it was in his power to do, regardless of their merits and demerits." But I have felt bound, in concluding this essay, to point out the immeasurable superiority possessed by Buddhism, in virtue of its ethics, over the antitheistic systems of contemporary Europe.

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convert, was sure that the message will be heeded. He predicted that "out of the certain future union of Western knowledge with Eastern thought there must eventually proceed a neo-Buddhism, which, embracing all the strength of science, is yet spiritually able to recompense the seeker after truth."¹ Whether Mr. Hearn's prediction will be accomplished, I do not know. But this I do know: that the teaching of the Buddha even in its most fantastic and corrupt form, is infinitely wiser, sweeter, and more ennobling than the doctrine of the school—unhappily the predominant school among us—which makes happiness, or agreeable feeling, the formal constituent of virtue, and seeks to deduce the laws of conduct from the laws of comfort; which insists that not the intention of the doer, but the result of the deed, is the test of the ethical value of an act; which, reducing the moral law to impotence by depriving it of its distinctive characteristic, necessity, degrades it to a matter of latitude and longitude, of temperament and cuisine; which robs it of its essential sanction, the punishment inseparably bound up with its violation, and denies the organic instinct of conscience that retribution must follow upon evil doing.

¹ *Gleanings in Buddha Fields*, p. 249. I may note that this view has been maintained, at some length, in Schultze's *Religion der Zukunft*.

III

Kant and the Buddha

(I)

I SUPPOSE there are very few people, in this country, of the classes vaguely called "educated," to whom the name of Kant is unknown. I feel sure there are fewer still who possess any real acquaintance with his work and its significance. The English mind is un-idealistic and alien from the profound and systematic thought of Germany. Even at our Universities, the number of serious students of philosophy is very small. But we all breathe—we cannot help it—the intellectual atmosphere of our age. And perhaps no one has done so much as Kant to influence modern thought.

It is rather more than a century ago that Kant died. The date—to be precise—was February 12th, 1804. On February 12th, 1904, his centenary was kept with great solemnity by the University of Königsberg in which well-nigh the whole of his working life had been spent, and which he raised from provincial obscurity to world-wide renown. A lasting memorial of the festival lies before me; a

collection of discourses¹ delivered upon the occasion of it by Professors and Privatdocenten of the University: "eine dem Leben und Lehren des grossen Philosophen gewidmete Festschrift." "We are all his scholars," said Dr. Julius Walter, now the occupant of his chair: and, assuredly, the contributors to this remarkable volume have paid no unworthy tribute to their Master. Of the fifteen discourses contained in it I do not propose even to enumerate the titles. My chief concern is with one of them, by Dr. Otto Franke, which deals with *Kant and the Old Indian Philosophy*, and my design is to point out the curious parallelisms, and the equally curious differences, between the doctrine of the author of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the doctrine of the Founder of Buddhism. And since I am not writing for experts, I will begin by exhibiting, in as untechnical language as the subject allows, what are the salient features of the Kantian system—a term which I use advisedly, and shall justify later on. It will, of course, be understood that my object is merely to expound and not at all to criticise. I shall let Kant speak for himself,² without interposing any views or opinions of my own.

¹ *Zur Erinnerung an Immanuel Kant: Abhandlungen aus Anlass der hundertsten Wiederkehr des Tages seines Todes herausgegeben von der Universität Königsberg.* Halle, 1904.

² To avoid constant references, let me say that all my quotations of Kant are from the *Critique of Pure Reason* (2nd Ed.), unless another source is indicated.

(II)

A very few words about Kant's career may not be superfluous as an introduction to a sketch of his teaching. His life presents the greatest possible contrast to the Buddha's. The Buddha was essentially a religious apostle in an age indeed when philosophy was not viewed apart from religion: his heart was filled with compassion for "the purblind race of miserable men": it may be said of him, as of One greater, that "he went about doing good." Kant, though holding firmly to a Theism of the natural order throughout a long life, marked by purity and philosophical dignity and adorned with many virtues of a Stoic cast, was no religious missionary, was no enthusiast of humanity. A student, from early manhood to extreme old age,¹ his days were devoted to abstract thought and the quest for truth. It is usual to divide his career into two periods, the pre-critical, ending with the year 1770—his forty-sixth year—and the critical, extending thence to his death in 1804. In the twenty*odd years of his working life comprised in the pre-critical period—years of indefatigable labour—the great problems of art, of ethics, and above all of physical science, were closely considered and profoundly pondered by him. But from the first he

¹ Age, of course, is a relative term. Kant, when he died at eighty, his frail frame and mighty mind worn out by the prodigality of his intellectual toil, was probably older than many men—instances will doubtless occur to every reader—whose span of life has been prolonged to ninety years or more.

clearly discerned—as he expressed it in a Latin thesis written at the age of twenty-three—that “the primary sources of the phenomena of nature are absolutely an object of metaphysics.” His whole mental progress during the pre-critical period may be described as a moving away from the Cartesian philosophy modified by Leibnitz, with which he had been in early youth indoctrinated, towards the sensualistic empiricism of Rousseau. It was Hume who, in his own famous phrase, aroused him from his dogmatic slumber: and for years he meditated on what has been called “das Leibnitz-Hume’sche Problem,” “voyaging through dark seas of thought alone.” Let us look a little at this problem.

The school of Hume insists, virtually, that the only knowledge possible to us is the knowledge of phenomena: more, that the impressions of our senses alone are clear and distinct, and bring us into contact with reality. On the other hand, what we may term the Cartesian rationalism of Leibnitz, carrying on the dogmatic tradition of antiquity and of the middle ages, found in the knowledge attainable by the senses, only appearance and contradiction. The function of reason, Leibnitz held, was to introduce light and differentiation and order into the data of sense, by means of notions and first principles given *a priori*. Knowledge of being, of substance, of causes, was deemed by this school to be real knowledge, and metaphysics to be the only possible, the absolutely necessary root of the tree of science. Such were the two schools with which Kant was confronted. But the scepticism of

the Hume school—practically a universal scepticism—never received his allegiance. The two deep ineradicable convictions from which he never swerved were faith in physical science, and faith in the moral law. A profound student of Newton, he held the teachings of that master to be beyond doubt. The Categorical Imperative of duty appeared to him equally indubitable. Hume's empiricism he regarded as overthrowing the certitude of physical science by reducing the laws of nature to mere links among subjective impressions. The dogmatism of Leibnitz he found to issue in those insoluble contradictions concerning the concepts of God, the Soul, and Freedom, which he tabulated later on in his famous Antinomies. It was, we should note, between the years 1760 and 1770 that he read Hume: and of that reading was engendered the central idea of the Critical Philosophy. His striking work *Dreams of a Visionary*, which he was led to publish in 1776 by the perusal of Swedenborg's *Arcana Celestia*, gives clear token of the goal to which his mind was tending: exhibits, we may say, "the baby figure of the giant mass of things to come at large" in his *Critiques*. He there indicates the great distinction between phenomenal and noumenal, though the terms are not used by him: he insists that reason, governed by the principle of identity, is impotent to grasp causes or substances in themselves: he maintains that "the fundamental concept of things as causes, the concepts of force and of action, if they are not borrowed from experience, are absolutely arbitrary and can never be proved or disproved"; that metaphysics,

from a speculative point of view, should content itself with being "a science of the limits of pure reason," "though this does not impair its practical value," or hinder it from offering us "a moral faith," "a hope in the future," or shut off the vision of a life to come.¹

We are here, as Ruyssen well observes, "upon the threshold of the really creative period of Kantian thought." Three years later we find a further development. There can be no doubt that Kant wrote in 1769 the celebrated passage inserted in the preface to his Second Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in which he tells us that in metaphysical problems we should probably succeed better if, instead of conforming our cognition to objects—a proceeding which results in no judgment *a priori* extensive of our knowledge—we assume that objects must conform to our cognition: just as Copernicus did in astronomy, who, when he found that he could not explain the movements of the heavenly bodies by the hypothesis that they revolved round the spectator, found the explanation in the hypothesis that the spectator revolved while the stars remained at rest. We have here the very central idea of Kant's new method. A year afterwards he developed it further in the Latin thesis *De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis*, written and defended by him in public disputation, according to Academic usage, on his appointment to

¹ *Kant, par Théodore Ruyssen*, p. 51. Let me here acknowledge my obligations to this excellent book, of which I have made free use in the next two pages. It is quite the best introduction to the study of Kant with which I am acquainted.

the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics. He here applies his discovery to space and time in a theory which eleven years afterwards he transferred, unmodified, to his *Critique of Pure Reason*, where it appears under the name of Transcendental Æsthetic.¹ Eleven years afterwards! Why, we may ask, did Kant delay so long the publication of a work which, as appears from his correspondence, had been thought out by him in 1771?² Why this protracted period of incubation? He has left us no data for answering the question. We can only conjecture that perhaps he was overwhelmed by the abundance of the revelation which had come to him: that the delicacy of his health presented obstacles to the full development in writing of his ideas: that intense scrupulousness, born of a conscience exquisitely sensitive to the obligations of exact veracity, fettered his pen: that the extreme difficulty of the problems dealt with eventually in his Transcendental Deduction, caused endless delays: that a presentiment of the far-reaching effects of the intellectual revolution which he was about to initiate led him to go over, again and again, ground of which he felt ever so sure. However this may be, and whatever were the reasons for the tardy appearance of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, it was not until 1781 that Kant published the work. He was then in his fifty-seventh year.

There is a passage in the *Psalms*, as given in the

¹ By which Kant means "the science of all the principles of sensibility (Sinnlichkeit) *a priori*."

² Kant's *Briefe*, ed. Schubert, p. 28.

Anglican Prayer Book, which I often think of in connection with the *Critique of Pure Reason*: "My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled, and, at the last, I spake with my tongue." This book of Kant's gives one the impression that it was *forced* out of him. It was his burden, so to speak: the prophetic message entrusted to him. He had kept it long to himself. At last he could no longer refrain from uttering it. We know that the book was composed in a few months. It is certainly the worst written of all his works, absolutely wanting in literary form—though with occasional flashes of real poetic inspiration—its sesquipedalian periods so entangled, the argument, difficult in itself from its subtilty and complexity, so complicated by remarks and restrictions, by proofs and parentheses, that the greatest mental concentration is necessary to seize the meaning.¹ I well call to mind how, more years ago than I care to remember, I was nearly overwhelmed with despair when I first applied myself to study it. And I still possess a sort of abstract in which I set down what, at last, I apprehended as its true sense: I shall keep this abstract before me in the attempt to present its leading features, as what was of use to me may perhaps prove useful to others.

Now, in the first place, we must note the word *Critique*. Kant's work was essentially critical. But

¹ Max Müller expresses the opinion in the Preface to his translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that "Kant's obscurity is owing partly to his writing for himself rather than others, and partly to his addressing himself, when defending a cause, to the judge and not to the jury."

a criticism of what? "Not," as he tells us, "of books and systems, but of the power of the reason in general with reference to all kinds of knowledge after which it may strive independently of all experience." One question which it has to decide is "the possibility or the impossibility of metaphysics in general." Up to that time metaphysical dogmatism had sought to attain to being-in-itself, by extending to the supersensible, methods successfully employed in the knowledge of phenomena. This "dogmatic procedure of reason without any previous criticism of its own powers" Kant holds responsible for "all the extremely dogmatic unbelief which is so hostile to morality."¹ Such criticism Kant aims at supplying. First he distinguishes between pure and empirical knowledge. "All our knowledge," he observes, "begins with experience; but that it all originates from experience by no means follows. It may well be that experience itself is made up of two elements: one received from impressions of sense; the other supplied by our faculty of knowledge on occasion of those impressions: an element added by the mind to the material furnished by the senses, an *a priori* element: an element independent not only of this or that experience, but of all experience and anterior to it."

The first step in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is to draw a clear distinction between the *a priori* and the

¹ "Ist die wahre Quelle alles der Moralität widerstreitenden Unglaubens der jederzeit gar sehr dogmatisch ist," are his emphatic words; and they are important as indicating the intensely ethical spirit in which he wrote.

a posteriori elements in knowledge. What then is the test whereby we make the distinction? Kant replies, in the words of Leibnitz, that necessity and strict universality supply the criterion of pure and *a priori* knowledge; and he instances the axioms on the assumption of the necessary truth of which pure mathematics proceed, as evidence that we have judgments which are necessary. Now experience being impotent to assume necessity and universality—the essential characteristics of scientific judgments—it is clear that all our knowledge is not received from experience. We must not forget Kant's fundamental principle, which was previously stated and may here be fittingly recalled, that knowledge is to be explained by the action of the intellect on objects. This, it may be observed in passing, is the doctrine of the scholastics, who, however, were little read and less understood in Kant's time. The view then prevailing was that things are given us as objects of cognition, and that knowledge proceeds from the action of things on the intellect.

Let us proceed a step further. Kant takes the fact of knowledge and asks, What does it imply? He answers, two conditions: the matter and the form. The matter is that which is given in experience (*das Gegebene*): the objects which strike our senses. What are the objects in themselves? Do they exist without us? That is a problem of ontology; and the point of view from which Kant writes in the *Critique of Pure Reason* does not admit of his discussing it. The existence of an object acting on a subject is a

fundamental postulate which this *Critique* accepts but does not prove. The form, on the other hand, admits of determination, but only *a priori*, because experience is possible solely by the addition of form to matter, and is powerless to apprehend form without matter. To determine *a priori*, the form of knowledge is the proper object of the *Critique*, and its method must be abstract or metaphysical analysis.

And here comes in the distinction between sensibility (*Sinnlichkeit*), "the power of receiving impressions (*Vorstellungen*), after the manner in which objects affect us," and understanding¹ (*Verstand*) a faculty of knowledge *a priori* which every necessary and universal judgment presupposes. A still further distinction has to be made, the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments. Analytical judgments are those in which the predicate is contained in the subject. For example, the judgment "all bodies are extended" consists in simply expressing and finding the concept of body in order to find their extension, an operation which involves nothing more than the identity of thought with itself. But judgments of this kind are purely explicative; they do not really enlarge (*erweitern*) our knowledge, they are, in fact, tautological. Of a very different kind are synthetic judgments where the predicate is not contained by anticipation in the subject. And such in truth are

¹ *Verstand* is really the faculty of rules by which phenomena are reduced to unity; the Reason (*Vernunft*) reduces these rules of the Understanding to unity by means of certain principles. Both the Reason and the Understanding may be used logically or transcendently.

mathematical judgments, though Hume did not realise it. Take a simple instance: $7+5=12$ is a synthetic proposition, because the concept of the sum $7+5$ really contains nothing more than the idea of the union of two numbers in one, and the idea of 12 is not in the least conceived by the conception of the union of 5 and 7. Now the question to which Kant addresses himself is, How are synthetic judgments possible? The inquiry is by its nature transcendental, as Kant defines the word; that is, it is not directed to objects but to our way of knowing them, so far as that is possible, *a priori*. It is a criticism of the faculty of reason—of pure (*rein*) reason considered in its form. Let us remember that the distinction between matter and form is the basis of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. "It is the matter of all phenomena that is given us *a posteriori*: the form must be ready *a priori* in the mind." If we would know how *a priori* judgments are possible, we must know the Forms of Thought. Kant divides them into two kinds: Forms of Intuition, which are inseparable from every mental act, and Forms of Thought—Categories he calls them—or pure conceptions of the understanding. Of these he reckons twelve, the chief being Causality.

We have become so accustomed now to the doctrine of Kant that it is not easy to appreciate the revolution wrought by it. He marks an epoch in the world's intellectual development. Dr. Weber says, "Present philosophy may be called Post-Kantian"; and in so saying he does not exaggerate. Before Kant, Space, Time, Causality (not to speak

of the other Categories) were regarded as objects of knowledge : as, so to speak, qualities of the thing-in-itself. No, he maintains, neither Space, nor Time, nor Causality is an object of knowledge. They are mental forms¹ which are the conditions of knowledge ; they are modes of perception, prior to all experience, through which alone the phenomenon becomes an object of thought. Space cannot be the result of experience, for experience is possible only in space. Time also is presupposed in every experience, because nothing could be the object of experience except as existing at the same time or in succession. We cannot think away space or time, nor can we think of space as internal or of time as external. As to the category of Causality, or sufficient reason, Max Müller has pointed out that it was well expressed by the familiar scholastic maxim, "Nihil est sine ratione cur potius sit quam non sit." The general postulate of Causality does not come to us *a posteriori*.

Such, then, is Kant's main work in the *Critique of Pure Reason*—to vindicate "certain ingredients of our knowledge as belonging to mind, not to matter : to the

¹ It is important to remember that, as Professor Max Müller points out, what Kant means by "forms of intuition" is not anything really innate in the form of ready-made ideas or images, but merely the inevitable receptivities of the Ego, according to which, if affected in certain ways, it represents those affections in certain forms ; what is innate is not the representation itself, but simply the first and formal cause of its possibility. Similarly, what Kant means by causality is "not an innate idea, but the *sine qua non* of the simplest perception of all thought *a priori* in every sense of the word."—*Science of Thought*, p. 148. This is precisely the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas, though Max Müller, probably, was not aware of that.

subject, not to the object: to the understanding, not to sensation: to the *a priori*, not to experience.”¹ But, further, Kant insists that these *a priori* laws of thought must never be applied outside the limits of sensuous experience. Hence it results that all objective knowledge is of a phenomenal character. “What may be the nature of objects considered as things-in-themselves, and without reference to the receptivity of our sensibility, is quite unknown to us. We know nothing more than our own mode of perceiving them, which is peculiar to us, and which, though not of necessity pertaining to every animate being, is common to the whole human race. With this alone we have to do.” True, “the reality of the matter of a phenomenon, I mean of its external existence, depends not only on the reality or external existence of the phenomenon, but of something beyond this, viz., the noumenon.”² But on this subject it will be well to let Kant speak for himself—in a compressed form, indeed. I take from my abstract of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, above mentioned, the following brief account of what he tells us in his famous chapter on the “Distinction of Phenomena and Noumena.”

Whatever the Understanding produces, it holds merely in trust for experience, as we have seen.

A concept cannot be employed transcendently.³ Only

¹ Max Müller, *Science of Thought*, p. 144.

² Coke, *Creeds of the Day*, Vol. II., p. 302.

³ Kant explains: “What we call the transcendental use of a concept in any proposition, is its being referred to things in general and things-in-themselves, while its empirical use refers to phenomena only, that is to objects of a possible experience.”

the empirical use is admissible. It has no objective validity without empirical intuition, that is, data of a possible experience.

The Understanding cannot possibly transcend the limits of sensibility beyond which no objects are presented to us. The principles of Pure Understanding are merely exponents of phenomena.

A concept of a Noumenon—which cannot in any way be shown to have objective reality—is problematical: that is, it is not contradictory, and it is bound up with certain concepts the range of which it serves to limit. We have then Understanding which, problematically, stretches beyond the sphere of phenomena, but we have not perception or intuition by means of which objects beyond that sphere can be presented: nor can we conceive how such a perception is even possible. Hence Understanding cannot be employed in its assertory function beyond the world of phenomena. The concept of a noumenon is the conception of a limit: a concept which is of merely negative use, but serving to check the presumption of sensibility: and so is not only admissible but necessary: is not an arbitrary fiction, though incapable of adding anything to the sphere of the senses. (Note that Kant does not speak of a causality properly attributed to the thing-in-itself. He maintains that the nature of the connection between noumena and phenomena is unknowable, all that we can affirm being that such a connection exists: our concept of it being merely imitative.) In the concept of a Noumenon the Understanding gets a sort of negative extension: for in calling things-in-themselves noumena, it rather limits the sensibility than is limited by it. At the same time it sets limits to itself. Things-in-themselves cannot be known by means of the Categories—and all that remains is to think them under a name that indicates something unknown.

Kant insists that if we carry beyond the limits of experience the conditions of that experience, the

Reason is involved in inextricable contradictions—Antinomies, he calls them—presenting quite opposite and equally sustainable, or rather unsustainable, explanations of the highest problems of metaphysics—the origin and extent of the universe: the existence anywhere, and above all in the thinking Ego, of a simple and imperishable unity; free causality; the existence of a Necessary Being—the First Great Cause.

Kant's conclusion then is—to put it in his own words—that “all the ambitious attempts of reason to penetrate beyond the limits of experience end in disappointment,” because we cannot get rid of the modes of space, time, causality and the rest. But, he recognises that “there exists in the faculty of reason a natural desire to venture beyond the bounds of experience.” Is there any way in which this desire can be gratified? Any way in which we can get beyond a conditioned representation of reality and attain to a perception of the Thing-in-Itself—the Idea, in Platonic phrase, the Eternal Form? Kant, while claiming to have shown, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that *knowledge*, in the proper sense of the word, is confined to phenomena, insists that in the practical employment—an employment absolutely necessary—of the pure reason, there may be founded a *belief* in supersensible realities. That is what he has expressed concisely in his celebrated dictum: “Ich musste also das Wissen aufheben um zum Glauben Platz zu bekommen.” His critical philosophy keeps the domain of knowledge and the domain of

faith apart, but insists on the rights of both, the one ruling in the phenomenal order, the world of nature, the other in the noumenal order, the world of liberty. Hence he was wont to speak of his doctrine as a doctrine of freedom "*eine Freiheitslehre.*" The subjective necessity of the moral law was as clear to him as the objective value of science—both being the work of reason, essentially one and the same. "Reason," he tells us, "enunciates laws which are imperative or objective laws of freedom, and which tell us what *ought* to take place, thus distinguishing themselves from the laws of nature which relate to that which *does* take place. The laws of freedom, or freewill, are here termed practical laws." "They are pure moral laws which determine entirely *a priori* (without regard to empirical motives, that is to happiness) the conduct of a rational being, or, in other words, the use which it makes of its freedom; and these are *absolutely* imperative (not merely hypothetically, on the supposition of other empirical ends) and therefore in all respects necessary." And again, "Man, limited strictly as a cognitive being (*ein erkennendes Wesen*), to the world of sense, reaches as an agent (*ein handelndes Wesen*) far beyond: nay, makes proof of his higher nature in this—that he erects himself beyond the world of sense; therein consists his autonomy or freedom." This is what he calls "*die Menschheit*:" the essential principle of humanity; the special prerogative of man. I add that for Kant, as for Plato before him, the existence of the hegemonic quality in the human soul, the sense

of will, is a fact of consciousness. Kant esteemed it a primary fact. So in his *Foundation for the Metaphysic of Morals* he writes, "As members of the world of understanding we recognise the autonomy of the will with its consequence—morality." A man's moral worth he regarded as determined by his will, and a good will was for him a will freely submitted to the moral law. It was, we should note, by "moral belief" that Kant found himself constrained to believe in God and in an existence beyond the grave. "For in this sphere," he writes, "action is absolutely necessary: that is, I must act in obedience to the moral law in all points. The end is here incontrovertibly established, and there is only one condition possible, according to my perception, under which this end can harmonise with all other ends; namely, the existence of God and a future life."

Thus does Kant answer the three questions—as he states them—in which "the whole intent of philosophy is centred: What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope?" I spoke in an earlier page of "the Kantian system." Kant's work is eminently architectonic.¹ On his explanation of the problem of knowledge hang all his theories, moral, æsthetic, judicial, historical, and religious. And they all hang together. There is no breach of continuity between *The Critique of Pure Reason*, *The Critique of Practical Reason*, *The Critique of Judgment*, the book on *Religion within the bounds of Pure*

¹ Of course it is imperfect; *The Metaphysic of Nature*, promised in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, was never written.

Reason, and *The Metaphysic of Morals*. They are all in harmony by the unity of their method and by the identity of their results. They are all informed by the same lofty ethical ideals, by the same luminous conception of human personality. Science, art, religion—all that constitutes civilisation, in the highest sense of the word—appeared to Kant the conquests, the creations of that free causality, the distinctive endowment as he judged, of the human race, in virtue of which “man is man and master of his fate.” His system, whatever else it may or may not be, is not only ‘a noble and systematic work of art,’ but a monument reared in the spirit of his own words, so full of august significance, which they have graven on his tomb: “The starry heaven above me! The moral law within me!”

(III)

I observed, in the beginning of this essay, that Kant has done more to shape the modern mind than probably any one else. The various schools of philosophy which have sprung up under his influence, exhibit, of course, vast diversity in their development of his thought. I say “of course,” for here the maxim applies, “*Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur.*” But his two doctrines of the relativity of knowledge and of the primary importance of will, seem to have won their way into something approaching general acceptance. It is strictly accurate to say that the jurists, theologians, historians,

poets, who have come after him, all hold of him. Nor, indeed, is this strange; for the variety of his conceptions is as striking as their unity. My present purpose, however, is not to trace his influence, whether in philosophy or in literature—or in physical science, for there, too, it has been potent. Some years ago I pointed out¹—I believe I was the first to do so—the curious affinity between the doctrines of the *Critiques of the Pure and Practical Reason* and the doctrines of the Catholic mystics. I wish now briefly to compare Kant's teaching with the teaching of the great Hindu sage, who, more than two thousand years before him, founded the most prevailing of the world's religions. And in doing this I shall keep before me Dr. Franke's learned paper, which I have previously mentioned, though I shall by no means follow it, or restrict myself to it. There are, however, two preliminary observations which I must make. The one is, that Kant could not possibly have had access to any Buddhist literature, as its discovery by Western scholars did not take place till long after his death; the other, that both he and the Buddha lived in "an age of metaphysical dogmatism, and withal scepticism, and felt the need of looking deeper into the mental procedure on which dogmatic speculation and ethical convictions were alike founded;"² and this fact no doubt supplies a key to certain similarities in their teaching.

¹ See *The Great Enigma*, pp. 272-280 (2nd ed.).

² *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics of the Fourth Century B.C., being a Translation of the First Book in the Abidhamma Pitaka*, by Caroline Rhys Davids. Introductory Essay, p. xlix.

There are, then, as it seems to me, seven very striking parallelisms between Kant's doctrine and the Buddha's. First, the foundation on which both build is the essential difference between real and empirical being, or, as Kant calls it, between the *noumenal* and the *phenomenal*. Of course, this portion of the Buddha's teaching was not original; he derived it from earlier Indian sages. But, unlike those sages, and like Kant, he abandoned the quest of real being, holding that the self—Kant's thing-in-itself—is, and ever must remain, an unknown quantity. Hence, like Kant, he speaks of it negatively, and restricts human knowledge to the phenomenal order.

Secondly. And so he is quite at one with Kant regarding those antinomies in which reason is involved when it travels beyond that order. In a singularly interesting dialogue with one of his disciples, Mālunkyāputta,¹ he expresses himself on this subject in language which strikingly recalls the argument in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Thirdly. The Buddha, then, certainly held, to employ the language of modern philosophy, that the world as object is conditioned by me as subject; and of this, Dahlke, who accounts it "the deepest thought which has ever entered the human mind," well observes that it is Kant's transcendental idealism thoroughly developed and practically employed.²

¹ See Vol. II., p. 144, of Neumann's *Die Reden Gotamo Buddha's aus der mittleren Sammlung-Majjhimanikāyo des Pāli-Kanons*.

² *Aufsätze zum Verständniss des Buddhismus*, Vol. I., p. 25, Professor Rhys Davids writes (*Dialogues of the Buddha*, Vol. I., p. 279), "The very core of the Buddhist Welt-Anschauung, of Buddhist philosophy,

Fourthly. Both Kant and the Buddha regard the moral law as the supreme guide of life, conducting men to the *summum bonum*, a law in the proper sense of the word, fenced about with rewards and penalties—not a mere string of principles or precepts—winning our admiration, while it humiliates us, at once attracting and alarming us, for we feel that we disobey it at our peril.

Fifthly. The moral law is for Kant essentially transcendental; therein lies the unique character of ethical phenomena. It is a fact of reason (*Factum der Vernunft*) imprinted on the consciousness of every rational being: ¹ it is not derived from sense, or from experience, personal or racial, of the tendencies of actions, but is “a sacred” order—note the adjective—valid not for men alone, but for all rational beings, because the basis of its obligation is not in the individual man, but *a priori* in the conception of pure reason. Similar is the Buddha’s teaching that

is *The world as we know it is within each of us*; and he quotes the words of the Buddha: ‘Verily I declare unto you, my friend, that within this very body, mortal as it is, and only a fathom high, but conscious and endowed with mind, is the world, and the waxing thereof, and the waning thereof, and the way that leads to the passing away thereof.’”

¹ It must not be supposed that Kant held the moral law to be an immediate datum of empirical consciousness: a ready-made law, so to speak, which reflection discovers in us. No; as he tells us in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, “We have consciousness of pure practical laws as we have consciousness of pure theoretical principles, by observing the necessity with which reason imposes them, and by making abstraction of all empirical conditions.” In the moral order the empirical consciousness lays hold of moral judgments and sentiments in the expression of practical life, but does not discover their law save by a transcendental analysis of the *a priori* conditions which render those judgments and sentiments possible.

all worlds are under a perfectly just law, supreme over gods and men, a law of which he accounts, like the tragic poet of Hellas, that "it is from everlasting, and no man knows its birthplace."

Sixthly. Both Kant and the Buddha insist upon the will as man's distinctive endowment, in virtue of which he is an ethical being. "Buddhism," it has been said, not too strongly, "is emphatically a philosophy, both in theory and practice, of the conscious will."¹ Kant declares that the only thing in the world which possesses an absolute value is a good will, a will freely determined by the moral law: by pure consciousness of what ought to be (*sollen*). That *ought* the phenomenal order cannot possibly yield; it exhibits only what *is*. The existence of the noumenal, the real self, as distinguished from the empirical, the phenomenal self, is, for Kant, the presupposition of all ethics. He accounts of morality, to borrow a phrase from the jurists, as "the constant and perpetual will" to secure what ought to be. By free will² Kant means the faculty of choosing that which reason, independently of natural inclination, declares to be practically necessary, or good. This free will—the phrase, as Green has pointed out, is a pleonasm: willing constitutes freedom—is considered,

¹ *Manual of Buddhist Psychology*, &c., Intro., p. lxx.

² Green correctly observes, "Though Kant appeals to the capacity for the motive 'I ought' as evidence that man is a free cause, he does not, on the whole, mean that only actions determined by this motive are free. 'Reason is the permanent condition of all actions of the human will' (he writes). It is the condition, we must suppose him to mean, even of actions which proceed from what he calls a pathologically affected will." *Works*, Vol. II., p. 100.

in the Kantian doctrine, as we have seen, to be man's prerogative. The teaching of the Buddha goes much further, attributing it to all sentient existence. He held the denizens of the abodes of bliss above, the creatures on the earth lower than us in the scale of being, to be endowed, as we are, with the power of willing good as good; to be capable, like us, of right and wrong, of merit and demerit; to be under the same law of moral probation as ourselves. The doctrine of Karma exhibits all existence divine, human, animal, in all its spheres, as linked together by a chain of moral causation; a conception never, probably, surpassed in grandeur.

Seventhly. There is a striking similarity between the attitude of Kant and of the Buddha towards the religions prevailing in their age and country. Both were, in a sense, iconoclasts, as exhibiting what they deemed a more excellent way than that in which they found men walking. But both respected the cults and creeds amid which they lived. It is notable that Kant, in the work which some account the crown of his system—*Religion within the Bounds of Pure Reason*—recognises fully the historical necessity and practical utility of the doctrines and institutions of Christianity, while restating them in terms of his own philosophy. This is quite in accordance with the spirit of the Buddha, who sought "to sever the growth of philosophical and religious thought from its ancestral stem and to plant it in a purely rational soil."¹

¹ *Manual of Buddhist Psychology, &c.*, Intro., p. xxxviii.

Such are some—by no means all, but perhaps the chief—of the parallelisms existing between the teaching of Kant and the teaching of the Buddha. I will conclude this essay by touching on three points as to which their teaching widely differs. In the first place, Kant was a Theist. He is at one with the Buddha as to the impossibility of logically proving the existence of God :¹ but he judged himself to have ample warrant for holding it subjectively as an ethical certitude. This has been pointed out in an earlier page : but I may here quote a short passage in which, treating of the Canon of Pure Reason, and discussing Opinion, Knowledge, and Belief, he expresses his view very clearly and very forcibly. “No one can boast that he knows there is a God . . . for if he knows that, he is just the man whom I have so long wished to find. All knowledge regarding an object of pure reason can be communicated : and so I might hope that through his teaching, my own knowledge would receive this wonderful extension. No : that conviction is not a *logical* but an *ethical* certainty : and since it rests on subjective grounds (of the moral sentiment), I must not even say ‘*It is morally certain*

¹ That is the correct way of describing the attitude of the Buddha with regard to this question. Dahlke well observes : “Der Buddhismus ist nicht atheistisch im Sinne von Gottleugnung ; nie hat der Buddha die Existenz eines göttlichen Wesen bestritten . . . er hat sich dieser Frage gegenüber völlig gleichgültig verhält.”—*Aufsätze zum Verständniss der Buddhismus*, Vol. I., p. 39. It is curious and noteworthy that Pascal has expressed Kant's doctrine almost in terms : “S'il y a un Dieu il est infiniment incompréhensible puisque n'ayant ni parties ni bornes il n'a nul rapport à nous ; nous sommes donc incapable de connaître ni ce qu'il est, ni s'il est.”

that there is a God': but '*I am* morally certain'; that is, my belief in God . . . is so interwoven with my moral sentiment that I am under as little apprehension of having the latter torn from me as of losing the former."¹ Now, assuredly, this is as far removed as possible from the thought of the Buddha. His belief² in the moral law as the supreme reality, did not lead him to the conception of a Supreme Moral Lawgiver of the Universe. Why should it not have so led him, as it led Kant? I suppose, as I have indicated in a previous page,³ that the explanation is to be found in the difference of the antecedents of the two teachers. Kant had been brought up on, had received as part of his intellectual inheritance, and saw no reason for breaking away from, a Theistic tradition deeply implanted, for centuries, in the European mind, and by no means alien from his system. The prevailing tone of Indian speculation in the age into which the Buddha was born, and for long ages before, was Pantheistic: and Pantheism is quite irreconcilable with the Buddhist doctrine.

¹ Kant observes in a note—"The interest which the human mind takes in morality—an instinct which, as I believe, is necessary to every rational being—is natural."

² Herr Dahlke devotes several pages to the task of proving that in Buddhism there is no element of faith (Glaube), a most astounding proposition which his aversion from religious dogma may account for, but cannot justify. He represents the Buddhist as saying, "I need believe in nothing supersensuous" ("Ich an nichts übersinnliches zu glauben brauche"). But the moral law *is* supersensuous; and it is the cornerstone of the Buddha's teaching. Herr Dahlke appears to have forgotten Kant's distinction between judgment and belief. I hope I may say without offence that this argument of Herr Dahlke's seems to me an example of Aberglaube very prevalent just now.

³ See p. 64.

And this brings me to the second great difference between Kant and the Buddha. One of the primary positions of Gotama is that separate existence is an evil and the supreme evil. So far, his system is Pessimistic. Kant was more or less of an Optimist: more, we must say, rather than less. Optimism was a superstition deeply rooted in the general mind of the eighteenth century: so deeply that all the lightnings of Voltaire's irony in *Candide*¹ were impotent to uproot it. There are numerous passages in the *Critique of Pure Reason*—to go no further—in which it finds expression: as for example, where Kant tells us in the Preface to the Second Edition, that, "the glorious order, beauty and providential care, everywhere displayed in the Universe give rise to belief in a Great and Wise Author of the Universe." "Everywhere!" It does not seem to have been a difficulty to Kant that everywhere "Nature, red in tooth and claw with ravine, shrieked against his creed." But, in truth, four years after these words were given to the world, we find him writing in a very different tone. In his article on *The Failure of every Philosophical Attempt in Theodicy*, the date of which is 1791, he vigorously refutes the Optimism of Leibnitz, and puts this significant question: "Would any man of sound understanding who has lived long enough [to judge], and has meditated on the worth of human existence,

¹ Kant was an omnivorous reader, but there is nothing to show whether he had read *Candide*. We may be quite sure, however, that its cynical impudicity would have shocked and disgusted his pure and religious soul.

care to go again through life's poor play—I do not say on the same conditions, but on any conditions whatever?" Still, taking his writings as a whole, Optimism is their dominant note.

The third great difference between Kant and the Buddha is as to the *summum bonum*. We have seen that they both conceived of the moral law as a law in the true sense of the word, fenced about with penalties and rewards; but they differed, as widely as possible, concerning the supreme good attainable by obedience to that law—the prize of the virtuous man's high calling. Kant accepted the animism generally held in his time, though well aware of its difficulties. He believed in the existence of the soul, a spiritual principle in man, surviving the death of the body; but he did not acquiesce in either the Creationist or the Traducian explanation of its origin;¹ he inclined to consider it as existing from all eternity to all eternity. This soul was for him the real man ruled by the supreme universal law of righteousness. In his

¹ See a curious paragraph in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (*Werke*, Hartenstein's edition, 1867, Vol. III., p. 516), in which he suggests "the transcendental hypothesis" "that all life is really intelligible only, not subject to the changes of time, and neither beginning in birth nor ending in death"; that "this life is phenomenal only, and merely a sensuous representation of pure spiritual life: that the whole world of sense is but an image, passing before our present mode of knowledge, but like a dream, without any objective reality in itself; and that if we could see ourselves and other objects, *as they really are*, we should see ourselves in a world of spiritual natures, our community with which did not begin at our birth, nor will end with the death of the body, both being merely phenomenal." Of course, he warps us that "we really *know* nothing whatever about this, and cannot seriously assert it." (*Wir von allem diesem . . . nicht das Mindeste wissen, noch im Ernste behaupten.*)

Religion within the Bounds of Pure Reason he speaks of "the expectation naturally entertained by all men of a happy life hereafter proportioned to the deserts of their moral conduct." The thought, indeed, seems to have been habitual with him. Now this belief in the existence and immortality of a soul was, as we all know, utterly rejected by the Buddha, who discerned in man no ego, no permanent unity,¹ but merely the fleeting union of a number of qualities, always in flux, and constituting an unstable individuality. For him, the ethical character, the Karma, was the real man, surviving the death of the body, for rebirth. The animistic doctrine with all that it involves, constitutes for the Buddhist, "the heresy of individuality," and is proposed only to be reprobated in the strongest terms. Thus, in the *Majjhima Nikāya* the position, "I shall continue to be in the future, permanent, immutable, eternal, of a nature which knows no change: yea I shall abide to eternity"—which is really the Kantian view of the *summum bonum*—is condemned as "simply and entirely a doctrine of

¹ There is a passage in Chapter II. of the *Transcendental Dialectic* in which Kant approximates closely to this Buddhistic view. He remarks, "In what we call the soul there is a continuous flux, and nothing permanent except it may be (if people will so have it) the simple I," which, he goes on to say, is "a mere form of consciousness." He is led to the conclusion that it is not "possible to get any knowledge by pure reason of the nature of a thinking being in general," that "a rational psychology is impossible." But he adds, "It is nevertheless possible that I may find warrant, from other than purely speculative causes, to hope for an independent, and, during every possible change of my state, permanently abiding existence of my thinking nature." He relegates the being of the soul to the domain of belief; unquestionably he, personally, believed it. The doctrine of Karma seems never to have crossed his mind.

fools." The Buddhist *summum bonum* is not "a happy life hereafter," but Nirvāna—the dying away of lust, ill-will and stupidity, and not-going-to rebirth.

So much as to the more salient differences between the doctrine of Kant and the doctrine of Buddha: differences which seem no less striking and significant than the parallelisms.

IV

The Saints of Islām

(I)

THERE are two reasons why, as it seems to me, Islām may be deemed to possess a peculiar interest for thoughtful minds. In the first place, like Christianity, it has sprung from the faith of Abraham; and its relationship to the religion of Jesus Christ is not unlike the relationship of Ishmael, the son of the bondswoman, to Isaac, the child of promise. Between the two systems there is to be traced, both in their fundamental doctrines and in their historical development, a family resemblance no less full of instruction than is the dissimilarity which may be traced more frequently still. Then, again, Islām exhibits just now many tokens of vitality. Indeed, a comparison between it and Christianity, in this respect, will not be altogether to its disadvantage. • While what once was Christendom is throwing off, almost everywhere, its public allegiance to the faith that mainly has made it what it is, is forsaking the guide of its youth, and forgetting the covenant of its God, there has been rekindled in Islām an enthusiastic eagerness, a defiant zeal of religious

profession, which has singularly impressed every careful observer of Eastern life. Throughout the Turkish Empire a system of primary schools, originally intended to be as godless as the most thoroughgoing Secularist among ourselves could desire, has become an instrument of strictly orthodox Mohammedan education. The precept of the Prophet against intoxicating drink—a distinctive law of his religion, we may account it—now receives generally a scrupulous obedience, which compares strikingly with the laxity of an elder generation. The Ramadān is well observed, and—singular contrast to the spectacle presented by Lent in, say, France or Italy—even those who transgress its penitential discipline pay it exterior respect, and veil in privacy their self-indulgence.¹ The public offices of religion are largely attended; the holy places are thronged by pilgrims from all parts of the Muslim world; and what is even more significant, that missionary activity which may be considered the main test “stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ,” is most remarkably and most fruitfully manifested. A very competent authority tells us, “While all the temporal advantages offered by European protection and support, not to mention the direct persuasion and indirect subsidy of well-to-do missionaries, can scarcely, or indeed more truly not at all, procure a single convert from Islām to any form of Christianity, Greek,

¹ “Le jeûne du mois de Ramadhān est observé strictement par l’immense majorité des fidèles : ceux mêmes des riches qui se permettent de l’enfreindre le font en secret et ne veulent pas en avoir le nom.”—Dozy : *Essai sur l’Histoire de l’Islamisme*, p. 508.

Armenian, Catholic, or Protestant, on the other hand, a reverse process yearly enrolls a very sensible number from one or another, or all of these sects, under the unity of the Green Banner. This in Turkish Asia; while from Africa reports reach us of whole Negro tribes abandoning their hereditary fetish for the religion called of Abraham; and, after all due allowance made for distance and exaggeration, the current idea that the Libyan Peninsula will soon be, what its best portions in North and East already are, a land of Islām, seems by no means destitute of probability. To sum up: Mohammedan fervour has first been thoroughly rekindled within the limits which its half-extinguished ashes covered a hundred years ago; and next, the increased heat has, by a natural law, extended over whatever lies nearest to but beyond the former circumference.”¹

(II)

Such are some of the special claims upon our attention which the religion of Mohammed presents. In what I am about to write, it is not my purpose to enter upon a discussion of the origin of that religion, or to consider its relations with Judaism on the one hand, and with Christianity upon the other. I wish rather to point—and I cannot pretend to do more than point—to a very fruitful field of inquiry in connection with Islām, which has, as yet, been little

¹ *Essays on Eastern Subjects*, by W. G. Palgrave, p. 123.

explored by European scholars, and to which I desire to direct attention—I cannot pretend to do more than that—I mean its hagiology. Dogma and duty are not the whole of a religion. There are in our nature needs of loving and of suffering, as well as of believing and of doing; and no faith that does not contain something to satisfy these needs could ever have wielded that vast power which, as a matter of fact, has been and is being exercised by Mohammedanism. Hence the importance of the school to which the name of Sūfis is generally given. M. Dozy well remarks: “The influence which Sūfism has exercised over the Musalman world, and which in our own days is rather increasing than diminishing, has been extremely great”; and Herr von Kremer considers it “the preponderating element in Musalman civilisation.” Sūfism has furnished Mohammedanism with its Saints; and it is in the Saints of a religion that the spiritual instincts and characteristics of its votaries are most clearly and faithfully imaged. But the Sūfis have not been merely the Saints of Islām; they have been also its sages and its singers. Muslim poetry is, for the most part, the expression of Muslim mysticism. Muslim philosophy has sprung out of Muslim theology.

We must go back to the very days of the Prophet himself for the germ of the spiritual movement which was so greatly to affect his religion. It was developed, indeed, mainly in Persia, and, no doubt, was largely influenced there by race and older historical beliefs; so that it may be correctly regarded as, to some extent, representing the victory of the richer Aryan over the

simpler Semitic spirit. But, as Dr. Pusey has judiciously observed, the speedy growth of mystical doctrine in the thin and arid soil of Mohammedanism also bears eloquent witness to the longing innate in the human heart for union with God¹. We must not forget, that there was a strong vein of enthusiasm in the Prophet of Islam, bald and austere as was the monotheism taught by him. Yes, and we may safely affirm a strong vein of asceticism too, in spite of the licence which he permitted himself in the matter of his wives—a licence to be judged rather by the Patriarchal than by the Evangelical standard, and with due regard to the habits and traditions of his age and country. Certain it is that there are passages in the *Qur'ān*—the transcript, be it remembered, of its author's mind—in which warrant may be found for those mystical tendencies so strongly displayed by some of Moham-

¹ The following interesting remarks occur in Dr. Pusey's preface to the second part of Nicoll's Cat. of MSS. in the Bodleian:—"Adnotavi præterea (quotiescunque id mihi innotuit), qui scriptores, quæve opera è Sufiorum, scholâ profecta essent quippe quorum ingenia atque proprietates, à Tholuckio jam optimè reseratas, penetras perspectas habuisse, Christiano nomini, et mihi quidem videtur, aliquantum saltem proderit. Eam enim doctrinam ex arido atque exili Mohammedanismi solo tam cito esse enatam, res est per se admiratione digna, quæque desiderium illud, menti humanæ ingenitum, dissertè attestatur, quo extra se proripitur et cum Deo rursus conjugi, necessitate quâdam naturæ, vehementer cupit; nobis porro ob frigus illud, quò subinde opprimimur, pudorem merito incuteret alienorum fervor; multum denique interesse mihi visum est, eos qui Mohammedanos, Persas vero præsertim, ex erroribus suis revocare studuerint, verum, quod in horum placitis insit, à falso distinguere, et pro adminiculo quodam veritatis Christianæ ut scire." I am indebted for this quotation to Professor Cowell's very valuable article on Persian Literature in *Oxford Essays*, 1855, p. 162. The work of Tholuck, to which Dr. Pusey refers in the very erudite *Sufismus*, the edition of which before me, is dated "Berolini, MDCCCXXI."

med's dearest friends and companions, especially by Ali, the son of Abū Tālib, and which find their natural issue in the life of poverty, mortification, and detachment. It is, however, in Taūs Abū 'Abdi-'r-Rahmān, who died in the year 102 of the Mohammedan era, that we should perhaps discern the true founder of Islāmite asceticism. The friend of Zaynu-'l-'Abidin, Ali's grandson, the pupil of Abū Hurayra, the devoutest of the Prophet's friends, and of Ibn 'Abbās, renowned alike for his profound learning and his spotless life, Taūs was the guide and oracle of a school of disciples whom he trained in mortification, poverty, contempt of the world, and the various spiritual arts and devout practices of the contemplative life. He it was who first adopted the high cap of woollen (*sūf*) whence the religious of Islām were to derive their commonest appellation of *Sūfī*, and the *Khirqā*, or long patched robe, which is their distinctive habit. Of his numerous successors whose praise fills the second of the Mohammedan centuries, some continuing to dwell at Mekka, while others carried back to their own lands the spiritual discipline they had learned there, the time would fail me to speak. Among the most famous of them was Ibnu-'s-Semmāk, the eloquent and indefatigable preacher, whose fine saying, "Fear God as though you had never obeyed Him, and hope in Him as though you had never sinned against Him," has become widely known beyond the limits of his own communion.

It was in this second century of Islām that Muslim dervishes first received a common rule from Fudhayl

Abū 'Ali Talikani of Khorāsān, who had begun life as a common highway robber. The story of his conversion is worth telling. It was in an hour when he was bent upon the gratification of a lawless passion—he was concealed upon the roof of the house where the girl who was the object of it dwelt—that the verse of the *Qur'ān*, recited by some pious person in the neighbourhood, fell upon his ear : “ Is it not high time for those who believe to open their hearts to compunction ? ” and the words sank into his soul, and smote him down in masterful contrition. “ Yea, Lord,” he exclaimed, “ it is indeed high time ; ” and at once awaking from his dream of sin he passed the night in profound meditation. The next morning he assumed the ragged robe of the religious mendicant, and in time became widely celebrated for his sanctity and wonderful works, and drew to himself many disciples, to whom he gave a rule of life, the original of the monastic institute of Islām. His favourite virtue is said to have been the love of God in perfect conformity with His holy will. It is related in his history, that upon one occasion, being asked by the luxurious Khalīfa Hārūnu-'r-Rashīd, “ Have you ever met with any one of greater detachment than yourself ? ” he made answer : “ Yes, O Khalīfa ; your detachment exceeds mine, for I have only detached myself from this litt'e world doomed to perdition, while you seem to have detached yourself from the world which is infinite and shall endure for ever.” The third son of that great monarch was of a very different spirit from his father. When a mere youth, Prince Ahmed,

overcome by the sweetness of the life of self-renunciation, withdrew from the splendours of the court of Bagdād, and went secretly to Basra, where he dwelt, unknown, among the poorest of the poor, his bed a piece of matting, his pillow a stone, working with his own hands for his daily subsistence, and taking no thought for the morrow, for what was left after he had satisfied the bare necessities of the body he bestowed in alms. This St. Alexius of Islām died at twenty, his delicate frame quite worn out by his austerities. But before he passed away he sent to the Khalīfa the one relic of his former rank which he had retained, a precious jewel, given him by his mother Zubayda, with the message: "He who sends thee this, wishes thee such happiness at thy last hour as he himself enjoys." Fudhayl's successor in the generalship of his order, Bishr the Barefooted, was, like himself, a reclaimed sinner. The legend tells us that his conversion was on this wise. One day, as he was walking in the streets of Bagdād, he saw a piece of paper, upon which was written the most holy Name of God, lying on the ground. He picked it up, and took it home with him to preserve it from profanation, and in the night he heard a voice, "Bishr, thou hast honoured my Name, and I will honour thine in this world and in the next to come." Next day he entered upon the life of penance. His greatest trial is said to have arisen from the praise of men. "O God," he would pray, "save me from this glory, the requital of which may be confusion in another life."

The great light of Mohammedan monasticism in

the third century is Dhū-'n-Nūn, the Egyptian, of whose supernatural powers such striking narratives remain, and whose singular intrepidity in rebuking wickedness in high places signally illustrates the virtues of which he is held by Muslim hagiologists to be the special type—confidence in God and contempt of the world. His scourgings and revilings, his chains and bitter bondage, only drew from him, as his biographer relates, expressions of joy that he was counted worthy to suffer thus for God. Three things are said to have been the subject of his constant prayer—that he might never have any certainty of the morrow's subsistence; that he might never be in honour among men; and that he might see God's face in mercy at the hour of death. He was buried at Cairo, where his shrine still attracts numerous pilgrims. In the next century we come upon the great name of the martyr Hosan-el-Hallāj. He suffered at Bagdād in the year 303 of Hijra, "though not until he had founded a new and well-defined school of doctrine, destined to count among its professors in later times three names of gigantic reputation and influence in the East—the ascetic 'Abdu-'l-Qādiri-'l-Gilānī, the doctor Muhyi-'d-Dīn, Ibnu-'l-'Arabiyyi-'l-Magribī, and the poet 'Umar Ibnu-'l-ridh, author of the celebrated *Diqān*, unrivalled in depth and beauty"¹ It is related of him that "his fasts were prolonged to three or four continuous days,

¹ *Home and Foreign Review*, vol. iv. p. 571. I am glad to acknowledge my indebtedness to the very able paper on *Asceticism amongst Mahommedan Nations*—it is commonly attributed to Mr. W. G. Palgrave—whence these words are cited, and from which much of the matter of this and the two preceding pages has been obtained.

and were accompanied by ecstasies, in which he was often seen raised from the earth and surrounded by light." The distinctive note of his teaching was the freedom of the human will, a tenet which aroused against him much theological animosity. He was put to death with circumstances of revolting cruelty, and his last utterance amid his torments was an exhortation to those who stood around not to allow the spectacle to make them doubt of the Divine goodness: "God herein treats me as a friend treats his friend: He passes to me the cup of suffering of which He has first drunk Himself"—an enigmatical saying in the mouth of a Muslim, lending some colour to the accusation of covert Christian teaching brought against the martyr.

(III)

I cannot follow further, even in this fragmentary outline, the long catalogue of Muslim Saints. I go on to consider their doctrine, which presents a curious analogy to much that we find in the writings of Christian mystics; although, of course, differences of the most far-reaching kind also exist. I do not know where a better compendium of it, in its practical aspect, is to be found than in the *Pend-Nāma*, or "Book of Counsels" of Farīdu-d-Dīn, 'Attār, of which we owe an excellent translation, enriched with copious and profoundly erudite notes, to M. Silvestre de Sacy. The author of this poem, or, as we should rather say,

religious manual in verse, was himself an eminent Saint. His biographer, Dawlatshāh of Samarqand, tells us that in the practice of the divine precepts he had no equal : that for his tender piety, his affectionate and loving devotion, he was reckoned the light of his age : that he was submerged in the ocean of the knowledge of God, plunged in the sea of the Divine Intuition. Born in the year 513 of the Hijra, the son of a rich trader in spices and drugs, he succeeded to his father's business on coming to man's estate, and prosperously carried it on, until one day, as he was standing among his bales, surrounded by his clerks and servants, a holy anchorite appeared before him at the door, and gazed around with strange, wild eyes, which soon filled with tears. 'Attār sharply rebuked him for his seeming curiosity, and bade him go away. "That is easily done" said the dervish ; "I have little to bear along with me : nothing but this poor habit. But you --when the time comes for you to go away, with all this costly merchandise, how will you set about it? You would do well to arrange, before that inevitable hour arrives, about the packing up of your treasures." An old and well-worn argument, which sufficed for 'Attār, as it has sufficed for millions before and since. Was it with him as with the knight of the Arthurian romance, listening to the nun who had seen the Holy Grail?—

. . . . and as she spake,
 She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
 Through him ; and made him hers, and laid her mind
 On him ; and he believed in her belief.

It may well have been. The word which the historian uses of the ascetic signifies—"he who is illuminated," and whose light in turn attracts others. 'Attār was not disobedient to the heavenly calling. "He forsook all that he had, renounced entirely the business of the world, and betook himself to penance. From a captive fast bound in the chains of ambition and lucre, he became the prisoner of sorrow, but a sorrow which leads to true liberty." Entering the monastery of the venerable sheikh Ruknu-'d-Dīn-Asaf, who was then one of the most distinguished masters of the contemplative life, he gave himself up wholly to the things of God, and at the close of his days he was held to have attained to the highest degree of spirituality that can be reached in this world—that seventh stage described by himself in words which I shall give later on. We owe to him the *Lives of the Saints* of the order to which he belonged, and mystical poems which hold a high place in Persian literature. His life of piety was crowned by martyrdom at the hands of the Mogul invaders under Jengīz Khān.

His *Pend-Nāma*, with which I am immediately concerned, appears to have been composed for some beloved disciple, who is addressed throughout it as "My Friend," "My Brother," and more frequently "My Son." In reading it we are reminded at one time of the *Imitation*, at another of the *Spiritual Combat*, and again of the Sapiential books of the Christian canon. He begins by invoking the name of God—the All Bountiful and All Merciful, essentially

Holy in His Nature, and exempt by His Attributes from all imperfection. Next the Prophet is celebrated : and then there are verses in honour of the seven chief Doctors of Islām. A confession of sin and prayer for pardon follows, conceived in a strain of intense realisation, on the one hand, of the corruption of human nature as seen in the light of the Divine perfections ; and, on the other, of the illimitable mercy of God. "Thou doest only good. We have done very wickedly. Every instant of our existence has been marked by new faults. We have never once obeyed Thy laws with a heart entirely submissive and content. A fugitive slave, I approach Thy gate. Shame hath covered my face. But Thyself hast commanded Thy servants not to give themselves up to despair.¹ Thou shalt purify me from my sins before Thou turnest me again to the dust." The fifth chapter treats of the battle which must be delivered to inordinate affections and corrupt inclinations, and celebrates the excellence of voluntary poverty, to which nothing is preferable, of obedience, of mortification, of detachment from all created things—the indispensable instrument of true and everlasting felicity. And so throughout the seventy-nine chapters of the work the praises of these virtues constantly recur, and their necessity is insisted upon. The sixth chapter, upon the advantages of silence, might have

¹ The reference is to the verse of the *Qur'ān* : "Servants of God, who have destroyed your own souls by your iniquity, despair not of His mercy : for there is no sin which He pardoneth not. He is forgiving and merciful."—S. xxxix. v. 53.

been written by a Trappist. "My brother," it counsels, "if thou seekest the Lord, never open thy lips but to pronounce His commandments." "Speak not, my brother, but to set forth His praise." "Silence is the exercise of the wise." "In the multitude of words is the death of the soul." I cannot linger over the exhortations of 'Attār to purity of intention, to humility, to modesty—"the man who knows not how to blush belongs to the company of Satan," he avers—to patient continuance in well-doing and endurance of injury, to charity to all God's creatures, to confidence in God—"take no thought for the morrow; He who makes thee see to-morrow will take thought for its needs"—to perpetual celebration of the Divine praises. All the members of the body, he points out, have their proper office of praise to Him who made it: the hand in succouring those oppressed by the weight of their burden; the feet in visiting the afflicted; the eye in shedding tears through fear of God's judgments, or in considering the works of His omnipotence; the ear in listening to His word; the tongue in reading the precepts of the *Qur'ān*, or in reciting His doxologies. "The thought of God," he teaches, "is the true food of the soul: the only medicine for the wounds of the heart." Very striking is his chapter on that knowledge of God which is the fruit of contemplation—the name given to one devoted to the contemplative life, I may note in passing, is "he who knows the Lord Most High." This, the author insists, is the only science: he who is devoid of it is not worthy to be reckoned among men. But he who possesses it has

no place in his heart, save for God only. And he goes on: "Come, I will show thee what the world is like. It is like a phantom which a man sees in sleep: and when he awakes no profit remains to him from his sweet illusion. So, when death comes and wakes us from the dream of life, we carry away with us nothing of the good things we have enjoyed in this world." And in another place he likens the world to an outworn beauty, who decks herself as a young bride and ever seeks to attract a new lover. "Happy the man," he says, "who has turned his back upon her and her seductions, and has bidden her an eternal divorce."

So much as to this *Book of Counsels*, to which, for its virility, its simplicity, its directness, its elevation, may well be assigned a high place among Manuals of Piety. To a Christian, of course, it presents one radical defect—the defect which, even before his conversion, repelled St. Augustine from certain philosophical writings, the excellence of which he fully felt: "that the saving Name of Christ was not mentioned therein."¹ But, although the Name of Him by whose mission to the world, to quote the words of the Johannine Epistle, was "manifested the love of God towards us," is absent from the pages of 'Attār, that love, nevertheless, is their main theme and the source of their inspiration. It will have been seen, from what I have quoted from the *Pend Nāma*, that the only worthy object of life, according to the Sūfis, is union with the Divine Essence, and in

¹ S. August. *Confes.* l. v. c. 14.

the road to this supreme goal they reckon seven stages, of which, under the designation of the Seven Valleys, 'Attār has given an account in his mystical poem, *Mantiq-u't-Tayr*—"The Colloquy of the Birds."¹ One of the birds says to the lapwing: "O thou who knowest the road that leads to the palace of the Great King tell me, dear companion—for our eyes are covered with darkness in gazing upon it—tell me how many parasangs long it is." "There are Seven Valleys to pass through," replies the dear companion; "but, since no traveller who had arrived at that blessed bourne has ever returned, no one knows how many parasangs long the way is. Ah, foolish one! since they have all lost themselves in a fathomless ocean, how should they come back to tell thee what they have seen? But listen. First, there is the Valley of the Quest: painful and toilsome is that valley; and there for years mayst thou dwell, stripping thy soul bare of all earthly attachment, indifferent to forms of faith or unfaith, until the Light of the Divine Essence casts a ray upon thy desolation. Then, when thy heart has been set on fire, shalt thou enter the second valley—the Valley of Love—a valley that has no limits. Next is the Valley of Knowledge, which has no beginning, neither ending. There each who enters is enlightened, so far as he is able to bear it, and finds in the contemplation of truth the place which belongs to him. The mystery of the essence of being is

¹ See chapters xxxviii. to xlv. I have before me the excellent edition of this poem—the Persian text with a French translation—of M. Garcin de Tassy (Paris, 1857).

revealed to him. He sees the almond within its shell; he sees God under all the things of sense; or rather he sees nothing but Him whom he loves. But, for one who has attained to these mysteries, how many millions upon the road have turned aside out of the way! The fourth valley is the Valley of Sufficiency,¹ where God is all in all: where the contemplation of the Divinity is the one reality, and all things else, sensible or intellectual, are absorbed in nothingness. The fifth valley is the Valley of the Unity;² there, the Divine Essence, independent of its attributes, is the object of contemplation. Thence the elect soul passes to the sixth valley: the Valley of Amazement: a dolorous region where, dark with excessive bright from the revelation of the Unity, it gropes its way in pain and confusion. He who has the Unity graven on his heart forgets all else and himself too. Should any man say to such an one, Art thou annihilated or existent, or both or neither? Art thou thyself or not thyself? he would reply: I know nothing at all, not even that I know nothing. I love; but I know not whom I love. I am neither Muslim nor infidel. What am I then? What say I? I have no knowledge of my love. My heart is at the same time full and empty. Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of Self: of complete poverty³—the seventh and the supreme degree, which

¹ Or, as M. Garcin de Tassy renders it, "Independence." He who attains to this stage is called by the mythical theologians of Islām 'Arif, "one who knows."

² This is also called *Hāl*, the State, or *Wajd*, Ecstasy.

³ This is the common term among the Muslim mystics for the highest degree of the contemplative life: absolute quietism; the praises of which

no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it. And, as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea, and is lost in it, finds perfect peace.

Such are the seven stages in the scale of perfection, as the Muslim masters of the spiritual life teach: and such is the goal to which they conduct; a goal not unlike the Nirvāna of the Buddhists.¹ Saddī, in his Third Conference, relates an incident from the life of a widely renowned Saint, which may be fitly cited here in illustration of this teaching:—

One night Abū Yezīd Bestāmī, being alone in his cell and plunged in ecstasy, cried out in his vivid apprehension of the feebleness and impotence of human nature, ‘O my God, when shall I unite myself to Thee? O God most High, how long wilt Thou leave me to consume away in this cruel separation? When wilt Thou give me the wine of Thy enjoyment?’ Then a voice from out of the impenetrable abode of the Divine Majesty sounded above his head, and he heard the words, “Abū Yezīd, thy *Thou* is still with thee. If thou wilt attain unto *Me*, quit thyself and come.”

And so Jelālu-'D-Dīn, the great Muslim Saint and Doctor, in the *Meṣneṣ*:—

One knocked at the door of the Beloved, and a voice from within said: “Who is there?” Then he answered: “*It is I.*”

are thus sung by an Arab poet, quoted by M. Silvestre de Sacy (p. 304): “Poverty is the substance; all else is but accident: poverty is health, all else is sickness; the whole world is illusion and falsity; poverty only is an excellent possession and real riches.”

¹ So Renan: “Sept degrés, disent les Soufis, mènent l’homme jusqu’au terme, qui est la *disparition* de la *disparition*, le Nirvana buddique par l’anéantissement de personnalité.”—*L’Averroès*, p. 112.

The voice replied : " This house will not hold *me* and *thee* ! " So the door remained shut. The lover retired to a wilderness, and spent some time in solitude, fasting, and prayer. One year elapsed, when he again returned, and knocked at the door. " Who is there ? " said the voice. The lover answered, " *It is th u.* " Then the door was opened.

It is under this allegorical veil that the Sūfis ordinarily expound their doctrines, for the setting forth of which they find the vulgar speech of this work-a-day world wholly inadequate. As Jelāl elsewhere says, " They profess eager desire, but with no earthly affection ; and circulate the cup, but no material goblet : since all things are spiritual, all is mystery within mystery." Thus does he interpret the deeper signification of the four pillars of the Mohammedan faith—the great duties of worship, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage.

Oh ! thou who layest a claim to Islām,
Without the inner meaning thy claim hath no stability.
Learn what are the pillars of the Mussulman's creed,—
Fasting, pilgrimage, prayer, and alms :
Know that fasting is abstinence from the fashions of mankind,
For in the eye of the soul this is the true mortification.
Pilgrimage to the place of the wise
Is to find escape from the flame of separation.
Alms are the flinging at His feet
All else beside Him in the whole range of possibilities.
Depart from self that thou may'st be joined to Him,
Wash thy hands of self that thou may'st obtain thy prayer.
If thou fulfillest these four " pillars of Islām,"
In th path of religion (*deen*) a thousand souls of mine are thy ransom !¹

The following translation of one of Jelāl's odes,

¹ Translated from the *Mesnevi*, by Professor Cowell, *Oxford Essays*, 1855, p. 171.

by the late Professor Falconer, commended by Professor Cowell as not less admirable for fidelity to the spirit of the original than for elegance of diction, may appropriately find place here as a further illustration of the teaching of Sūfism :—

- “ Seeks thy spirit to be gifted
With a deathless life?
Let it seek to be uplifted
O'er earth's storm and strife.
- “ Spurn its joys—its ties dis sever;
Hopes and fears divest;
Thus aspire to live for ever—
Be for ever blest !
- “ Faith and doubt leave far behind thee;
Cease to love or hate;
Let not Time's illusions blind thee,
Thou shalt Time outdate.
- “ Merge thine individual being
In the Eternal's love;
All this sensuous nature fleeing
For pure bliss above.
- “ Earth receives the seed and guards it,
Trustfully it dies;
Then, what teeming life rewards it
For self-sacrifice !
- “ With green leaf and clustering blossom
Clad, and golden fruit,
See it from earth's cheerless bosom
Ever sunward shoot !
- “ Thus, when self-abased, man's spirit
From each earthly tie
Rises disenthralled, t' inherit
Immortality ! ”

This is the key to the system of the Sūfīs, a system evidently imbued, and that largely, with Pantheism,¹

¹ The late Professor Palmer was of opinion that Sūfism “steers a

but Pantheism of no vulgar or ignoble kind; not the Pantheism so widely diffused among us, which is merely a bad dream of materialism after its surfeit among the swine; but rather that higher Pantheism which is but one side of an eternal truth, distorted and exaggerated by its incompleteness; that Pantheism sung by a great poet and teacher, who—however imperfect we may account his teaching—has unquestionably done much to elevate and purify the lives of millions:—

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?
Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that has power to feel "I am I."

It is upon the practice of Divine love that the Sūfis rest all morality. One of them being asked who was bad, replied, in words which recall the famous hymn of St. Francis Xavier, "Those who serve God out of fear of punishment or hope of reward." And then, the question being put to him, "From what motive do you serve God?" he answered, "Out of love to Him."

The practical expounders and preachers of Sūfism are the dervishes, the monks of Islām, whose numbers and influence are great throughout the East, and especially in Turkey, where, according to Dozy, thirty-two distinct orders of them are found.¹ In

middle course between the Pantheism of India on the one hand, and the Deism of the Coran on the other; that it "is really the development of the Primæval Religion of the Aryan race."—*Oriental Mysticism*, Pref. pp. ix. x.

¹ Mr. Brown, in his interesting work on the dervishes (p. 76),

Constantinople alone they have two hundred monasteries. They are also styled Faqirs, Poor Men of God, and constitute thoroughly organised bodies, minutely discriminated from each other. "Every school, every brotherhood has its own distinctive teaching and technicalities, its peculiar practices and observances, its Saints and Doctors, great men and founders"—just like the Benedictines and Carthusians, the Franciscans and Dominicans, among ourselves. It would be impossible to enter here upon a detailed account of Mohammedan monasticism, nor can I even attempt to discuss the general character and influence of the religious of Islām. Of course the proverb *cucullus non facit monachum* has its application to them; and there can be no question that there is in mysticism a tendency towards sensuality, and that of a gross kind—*corruptio optimi pessima*. Equally unquestionable is it that the dervishes have frequently incurred the suspicion of the ruling hierarchy of the Muslim Church.¹ Nor need this surprise us when we remember how Savonarola and St. John of the Cross fared at the hands of the appointed guardians of Catholic orthodoxy—how John Wesley and his companions were treated by the Anglican Episcopate. What seems to be certain is the strong

enumerates thirty-six, on the authority of Von Hammer; twelve dating from before the foundation of the Turkish Empire, the others of more modern origin.

¹ The term "hierarchy" is, perhaps, apt to mislead. The "Ulemā of Islām" are the doctors of the Mohammedan law, and are more like Jewish rabbis than a Christian *clerus*.

consensus of opinion from those who know Moham-
medan countries best, that, to use the words of Dr.
Wolff, the Sūfis, in many places, "are people who
really try to come nearer to God" "by a moral
life, separation from the world, meditation, prayer,
and reading the books of other religious sects";
that "many of them are like Cornelius, whose
prayers and alms went up for a memorial before
God."¹ And Professor Cowell judges that we must
look to Sūfism for that "preparation of the Moham-
medan mind which in due time may lead to the
overthrow of Islām for a purer creed."²

(IV)

Putting aside that question, let me here present to
my readers the following account of the admission of
Téwekkul Bēg into one of the dervish orders by
Mollā Shāh, a Saint and poet of some celebrity, who
died in the year of the Hijra 1072 (1661-62 of our
era), at Lahore, where his shrine was reared by the
Princess Fātima, daughter of Shāh-Jihān. Téwekkul
is himself the narrator :—

"Having been introduced, by means of Akhōnd Mollā
Mohammed Say'd, into the intimate circle of Mollā Shāh,
my heart, through frequent intercourse with the Sheykh, was

¹ Quoted by Professor Cowell, *Oxford Essays*, 1855, p. 175. Mr.
*Brown, in the preface to his work on the dervishes, bears testimony that
he has found those of them with whom he is acquainted "liberal and
intelligent, sincere, and most faithful friends."

² *Ibid.*

filled with a burning desire of reaching the sublime goal (of the mystical science), and I no longer found sleep by night, nor rest by day. . . . I passed the whole of that night without being able to shut my eyes, and betook myself to reciting a hundred thousand times the one hundred and twelfth chapter of the Qur'ān.¹ I accomplished this in several days. It is well known that in this chapter of the Qur'ān the great Name of God is contained, and that through the power of that Name, whoever recites it a hundred thousand times may obtain all that he desires. I conceived then the wish that the Master should bestow his affection upon me. And, in fact, I convinced myself of the efficacy of this means, for hardly had I finished the hundred thousandth recitation of this chapter of the Book of God, when the heart of the Master was filled with sympathy for me, and he gave order to Senghin Mohammed, his vicar, to conduct me the following night to his presence. During that whole night he concentrated his mind upon me, while I directed my meditation upon my own heart ; but the knot of my heart was not unloosed. So passed three nights, during which he made me the object of his spiritual attention without any result being manifested. On the fourth night Mollā Shāh said, ' This night Mollā Senghin and Sālih Bēg, who are both very susceptible to ecstatic emotions, will direct their whole mind upon the neophyte.' They obeyed this order, while I remained seated the whole night, my face turned towards Mekka, at the same time concentrating all my mental faculties upon my own heart. Towards daybreak a little light and brightness came into my heart, but I could distinguish neither form nor colour. After morning prayer I presented myself, with the two persons I have just mentioned, before the Master, who saluted me and asked them what they had done to me. They replied : "Ask him, himself." Then,

¹ Called "The Chapter of the Unity : " it is as follows :—

" Say He is God alone,
 God the Eternal ;
 He begetteth not, and He was not begotten ;
 And there is none like unto Him."

addressing me, he told me to relate to him my impressions. I said that I had seen a brightness in my heart; whereupon the Sheykh became animated, and said to me, ‘Thy heart contains an infinity of colours, but it is become so dark that the looks of these two crocodiles of the infinite ocean (the mystic science) have not availed to bestow upon it either brightness or clearness; the moment is come when I myself will show thee how it is enlightened.’ With these words he made me sit in front of him, while my senses were, so to speak, inebriated, and ordered me to reproduce within me his appearance. Then, having blindfolded me, he bade me concentrate all my mental faculties upon my heart. I obeyed, and in an instant, by the Divine favour and the spiritual assistance of the Sheykh, my heart was opened. I saw then within me something like a cup turned upside down; and this object, having been turned up again, a feeling of illimitable happiness filled my whole being. I said to the Master, ‘This cell, where I am sitting before you—I see a faithful reproduction of it within me, and it seems as if another Têwckkui Bēg were seated before another Moilā Shāh.’ He answered, ‘It is well; the first vision which presents itself to thy view is the figure of the Master.’ . . . He next bade me uncover my eyes, which I did, and I then saw him, by the material organ of vision, seated in front of me. Again he made me bandage, and I perceived him by my spiritual vision, seated in front of me just the same. Full of wonder, I cried out, ‘O my Master, whether I look with my bodily eyes or my spiritual vision, it is always you that I see.’ Meanwhile, I saw advance towards me a dazzling figure, and upon my telling the Master of it, he bade me ask the apparition its name. In my spirit I put to it that question, and the figure answered me by the voice of the heart, ‘My name is Abd Alkādir Gilānī.’¹ I heard this answer by my spiritual ear.

¹ A great Mohammedan Saint, whom I have already mentioned at page 123. He was born in the year of the Hijra, 471, and died in 561, after a life which his biographers relate to have been full from the first of sanctity and prodigy.

The Master then advised me to pray the Saint to give me his spiritual help and succour. I made this petition ; and the apparition said to me, 'I had already granted thee my spiritual assistance ; hence it is that the knots of thy heart have been loosed.' Full of deep gratitude, I imposed on myself the obligation of reciting every Friday night the whole Qu'rān in honour of this great Saint, and for two whole years I never neglected this practice. Mollā Shāh then said, 'The spiritual world has been shown to thee in all its beauty : remain there seated, effacing thyself completely in the marvels of this unknown world.' I obeyed strictly the directions of my Master, and, day by day, the spiritual world became more and more unveiled before me. The next day I saw the figures of the Prophet and his chief companions, and legions of Saints and Angels passed before my inner vision. Three months passed in this manner, after which the sphere where all colour is effaced, opened before me, and then all the figures disappeared. During all this time the Master ceased not to explain to me the doctrine of the union with God, and of the mystical intuition. But, nevertheless, the Absolute Reality would not show itself to me. The following verses revealed themselves at that moment to my heart, whence they passed unbidden to my lips :—

'That this corruptible frame was other than water and dust,
I knew not: the powers of the heart and the soul and the body I
knew not.
Woe is me ! that so much of my life without Thee has for ever fled
from me.
Thou wert I ; but dark was my heart : I knew not the secret
transcendent.'

"I submitted to Mollā Shāh this poetical inspiration, and he rejoiced that the idea of the union with God was at last manifested to my heart ; and addressing his disciples, he said : 'Téwekkul Bēg has heard from my mouth the words of the doctrine of the union with God, and he will never betray the mystery. His inner eye is opened ; the sphere of colour and

images is shown to him, and at last the sphere where all colour is effaced has been revealed to him. Whoever, after having passed through these phases of the union with God, has obtained the Absolute Reality, shall no more be led astray, whether by his own doubts or by those which sceptics may suggest to him."¹

(V)

Without stopping to comment upon this singular account, or to exhibit the curious parallelisms to it, which might be extracted from the mystical writers of the Western world, I will go on to say something in detail about the life and legend of the great Saint, Doctor, and Poet whose name I have already more than once mentioned—Jelālu-'d-Dīn Muhammed Er-Rūmī, commonly called by his spiritual children Melvāna, our Lord. We are indebted to the late Mr. Redhouse, than* whom no more competent scholar could have dealt with the subject, for a metrical version of a portion of the celebrated poem of this eminent person—the *Masnevī*, usually known as the *Mesnevīyi Sherīf*, or Holy *Mesnevī*, a work of which Professor Cowell judges that it is “in many respects one of the most remarkable productions of the Eastern mind;” that it is “unsurpassed in Persian literature for depth of thought or beauty of imagery;” that “the flow of fine things runs on unceasingly as from a river-god’s urn.” To his translation of the first book of the *Mesnevī*,

¹ I translate this account from Herr von Kremer’s striking paper “Le Spiritualisme Oriental,” published in the *Journal Asiatique*, 6me serie tome xiii.

Mr. Redhouse has prefixed a selection¹ from the *Acts of Jelāl*, and of certain of his ancestors and descendants, as collected by the historian El-Eflākī, a dervish of the order founded by Jelāl, which, by the way, is still the most considerable of the religious communities of Islām. It was under obedience to his spiritual director, Çelebī Emīr 'Arif, Jelāl's grandson, that Eflākī undertook the compilation of his work, which was begun in the year 1310 of our era, and finished in 1353. It contains, as Mr. Redhouse tells us, "many hundreds of anecdotes," each "the account of a miracle wrought by the living or the dead, or the narrative of some strange or striking event—related to Eflākī by trustworthy reporters, whose names are generally given, and for a few of which he vouches himself as an eye-witness." Hence its great value and importance to students of comparative hagiology.

Before proceeding to cite a few of the more characteristic portions of these *Acts*, I may mention that Jelālu'-d-Dīn—the name means Majesty of the Faith—was of a family in every way illustrious, his mother being a princess of the royal house of Khurāsān, while his father, Bahā'u'-d-Dīn (Beauty of the Faith), a lineal descendant of Abū-Bekr, the father-in-law and successor of Mohammed, holds a high place among those who, in the language of Muslim hagiologists, "attain to the Truth, and in whom are manifested the mysteries of Positive Knowledge;" and whose miraculous works evidence their supernatural gifts.

¹ My remaining references are made to this first portion of Mr. Redhouse's work, and I shall therefore give merely the page.

His birth is usually assigned to the year 603 of the Mohammedan era, and 1205 of our chronology; a memorable date in English History, for it was then that John, his military power broken by the loss of Château Gaillard, and of Normandy with it, was entering upon that protracted struggle with the Church and the Baronage, which was to issue in the granting of the Great Charter and the definite establishment of English freedom upon written law. It was the age, in the Western world, of St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Dominic, of St. Simon Stock, and St. Peter Nolasco—the heroic era of the Catholic religious orders, and the culminating time of the medieval period. When Jelāl was five years old, his father, Bahā'u-'d-Dīn—often called “the Great Master”—quitted Balkh, after denouncing the innovations in religion that had set in there, and prophesying the speedy overthrow of the kingdom. Fleeing from the wicked city, “as the Prophet fled from Mekka to Medina,” Bahā betook himself to Bagdād, and there publicly rebuked the K̄halifa for his evil courses, and warned him of his approaching slaughter by the Moguls. Thence he went upon the greater pilgrimage, and eventually, after various wanderings, settled in Qonya, the ancient Iconium, at the invitation of the king. It is related of him that, upon one occasion, having been invited by the monarch to survey from the terraced roof of the palace the walls and towers recently constructed for the fortification of the city, he observed: “Against torrents and against the horsemen of the enemy, thou hast raised a goodly defence; but what protection hast

thou built against those unseen arrows, the sighs and moans of the oppressed, which overleap a thousand walls, and sweep whole worlds to destruction? Go to, now ; strive to regain the blessings of thy subjects. They are a stronghold compared to which the walls and turrets of the strongest castles are as nothing." He died in the year of the Hijra 628, in the odour of sanctity, surrounded by his disciples. After his death, Jelāl appears to have gone for several years to prosecute his studies at Aleppo and Damascus, famous seats of learning in those days. He was peculiarly devoted to the Idealistic Philosophy of which El Gazzālī—often called the Mohammedan Plato, and judged by Renan "l'esprit le plus original de l'école Arabe"—had been the great exponent. Of the breadth and solidity of his acquirements in the liberal arts of the time there can be no question. His spiritual teacher was the Sheykh and Seyyid Burhānu-'d-Dīn, a former pupil of his father's, and a Saint and anchorite of great renown. From him Jelāl is stated to have received instruction in "the mysteries of mute reality and ecstasy," and, in "that knowledge, the knowledge possessed by the Prophets and the Saints, which is called the Science of Divine Intuition, the science spoken of by God in *Qur'ān*, xviii. 64 : "We have taught him a science from within Us." Thus, having become "perfect in all sciences, patent and occult, human and divine," Jelāl assumed the rectorship of his father's college in Qonya, where he abode until his death. And now, to give some extracts from his *Acts*. First take the following, which recalls a well-known incident in the life of St. Francis of Assisi :—

"A party of butchers had purchased a heifer, and were leading her away to be slaughtered, when she broke loose from them, and ran away, a crowd following and shouting after her, so that she became furious, and none could pass near her. By chance Jelāl met her, his followers being at some distance behind. On beholding him the heifer became calm and quiet, came gently towards him, and then stood still, as though communing with him mutely, heart to heart, as is the wont with saints, as though pleading for her life. Jelāl patted and caressed her. The butchers now came up. Jelāl begged of them the animal's life, as having placed herself under his protection. They gave their consent, and let her go free. Jelāl's disciples now joined the party, and he improved the occasion by the following remarks: 'If a brute beast, on being led away to slaughter, break loose and take refuge with me, so that God grants it immunity for my sake, how much more so would the case be, when a human being turns unto God with all his heart and soul, devoutly seeking Him. God will certainly save such a man from the tormenting demons of hell fire, and lead him to heaven, there to dwell eternally.' Those words caused such joy and gladness among the disciples, that a musical festival, with dancing,¹ at once commenced, and was carried on into the night. Alms and clothing were distributed to the poor singers of the chorus."²

¹ The famous religious dances of the dervishes, to accompany which Jelāl introduced instrumental music, the flute, the rebeck, the drum, and the tambourine, on account, as he explained, of "the lethargic nature" of the people of the country.

² Page 63. It may be well to subjoin for comparison the following beautiful passage from St Bonaventura's *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*: "Another time, when the man of God was at Grecio, a live hare was brought to him, which, although it was placed upon the ground, that it might escape, if it would, at the call of the loving Father leaped of its own accord into his bosom. And he, pressing it to him with tender affection, admonished it with brotherly compassion not to let itself be taken again, and then set it free. But although it was many times placed upon the ground, that it might depart, it still returned into the Father's bosom, as

Upon one occasion Jelāl is related to have silenced the frogs, who disturbed his preaching, as St. Francis silenced the birds :—

Jelāl was accustomed to go away every year for about six weeks to a place near Qonya, called "The Hot Waters," where there is a lake or marsh inhabited by a large colony of frogs. A religious musical festival was arranged one day near the lake, and Jelāl delivered a discourse. The frogs were vociferous, and made his words inaudible. He therefore addressed himself to them, with a loud shout, saying, "What is all this noise about? Either do you pronounce a discourse, or allow me to speak." Complete silence immediately ensued; nor was a frog ever once heard to croak again so long as Jelāl remained there. Before leaving, he went to the marsh, and gave them his permission to croak again now as much as they pleased. The chorus instantly began. Numbers of people, who were witnesses of this miraculous power over the frogs, became believers in Jelāl, and professed themselves his disciples."¹

Another very striking chapter from the *Acts of Jelāl* I must venture to quote, long as it is, because, so far as I know, it has no parallel in hagiological literature :—

"On one occasion, a rich merchant of Tebriz came to if it had some hidden sense of the pitifulness of his heart. At last, by his command, it was carried safely by the brethren to a solitary place."

¹ Page 62. How different the spirit which breathes through the parallel passage in the *Life of St. Francis*: "Because for the noise the birds made, the friars could not hear each other as they said the hours, the holy man said to the birds, 'My sisters, the birds, cease your singing until we have fulfilled our duty in praising God.' And the birds hushed their singing at once, and remained silent until the office was fully said, when they received permission from the man of God to resume their song. No sooner had he given them permission than they began to sing after their wonted manner, on a fig-tree near the cell of the man of God."

Qonya. He inquired of his agents there who was the most eminent man of learning and piety in the city, as he wished to go and pay his respects to him. He remarked to them: 'It is not merely for the sake of making money that I travel about in every country on earth; I desire also to make the acquaintance of every man of eminence I can find in each city.' His correspondents told him that the Sheykhul-Islām of the capital had a great reputation for learning and piety, and that they would be proud to present him to that celebrated luminary. Accordingly, he selected a number of rarities from among his store, to the value of thirty sequins, and the party set out to visit the great lawyer. The merchant found the dignitary lodged in a great palace, with guards at the gate, crowds of servants and attendants in the courtyard, and eunuchs, pages, grooms, ushers, chamberlains, and the like in the halls. . . . He now offered his presents, and then inquired of the great lawyer whether he could solve a doubt under which he was then labouring. This he stated as follows: 'Of late I have been sustaining a series of losses. Can you indicate a way by which I may escape from that unfortunate position? I give, every year, a fortieth part of my liable possessions to the poor, and I distribute alms besides, to the extent of my power. I cannot conceive, therefore, why I am unfortunate.' Other remarks he made also to the same effect. They appeared to be lost on the great luminary, who affected to be otherwise preoccupied. At length the merchant took leave, without obtaining a solution of his difficulty. The day following he inquired of his friends whether there did not chance to be, in the great city, some poor mendicant of exemplary piety, to whom he might offer his respects, and from whom he might, haply, learn what he longed to know, together with advice that would be of service to him. They answered, 'Just such a man as thou describest is our Lord, Jelālu-'A-Dīn. He has forsaken all pleasures, save only his love towards God. Not only has he given up all concern for worldly matters, he has also renounced

all care as to a future state. He passes his nights, as well as his days, in the worship of God; and he is a very ocean of knowledge in all temporal and spiritual subjects.' The Tebriz merchant was enchanted with this information. He begged to see that holy man, the bare mention of whose virtues had filled him with delight. They accordingly conducted him to the college of Jelāl, the merchant having privately furnished himself with a rouleau of fifty sequins in gold as his offering to the Saint. When they reached the college, Jelāl was sitting alone in the lecture-hall, immersed in the study of some books. The party made their obeisances, and the merchant felt himself completely overpowered at the aspect of the venerable teacher, so that he burst into tears, and could not utter a word. Jelāl addressed him therefore as follows: 'The fifty sequins thou hast provided as thy offering are accepted. But better for thee than these are the two hundred sequins thou hast lost. God, whose glory be exalted, had determined to visit thee with a sore judgment and a heavy trial; but, through this thy visit here, He has pardoned thee, and the trial is averted from thee. Be not dismayed. From this day forth thou shalt not suffer loss; and that which thou hast already suffered shall be made up to thee.' The merchant was equally astonished and delighted at these words; more so, however, when Jelāl proceeded with his discourse. 'The cause and reason of thy bygone losses and misfortunes was, that on a certain day thou wast in the west of Firengistān (Europe), where thou wentest into a certain ward of a certain city, and there sawest a poor Firengī (European) man, one of the greatest of God's cherished Saints, who was lying stretched out at the corner of a market-place. As thou didst pass by him, thou spattest on him, evincing aversion from him. His heart was grieved by thy act and demeanour. Hence the visitations that have afflicted thee. Go thou then, and make thy peace with him, asking his forgiveness, and offering him our salutations.' The merchant was petrified at this announcement. Jelāl then

asked him, 'Wilt thou that we this instant show him to thee?' So saying, he placed his hand on the wall of the apartment, and told the merchant to behold. Instantly a doorway opened in the wall, and the merchant then perceived that man in Firengistān, lying down in a market-place. At this sight he bowed down his head, and rent his garments, coming away from that saintly presence in a state of stupor. He remembered all these incidents as facts. Immediately commencing his preparations, he set out without delay, and reached the city in question. He inquired for the ward he wished to visit, and for the man whom he had offended. He discovered him lying down, stretched out as Jelāl had shown him. The merchant dismounted from his beast, and made his obeisance to the prostrate Firengī dervish,¹ who at once addressed him

¹ Christian monk. One of the great offences of the Sūfis in the eyes of Muslim orthodoxy is their attitude towards religions other than Mohammedan. There is a proverbial saying, often quoted by their writers, which, literally rendered, means, "A Sūfi knows no religion," and which their adversaries take literally, while they themselves expound it to signify, "A Sūfi thinks ill of no religion." It cannot be doubted that, at all events the more advanced of them in the mystical doctrine, consider religious systems to be merely instruments whereby is expressed, faintly and inadequately at the best, celestial melody, or, as the Germans would say, *Vorstellungsarten*, "modes of representation," some better, some worse, but all imperfect. I take it that Jelāl would have agreed with Tennyson:—

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Thus, while themselves scrupulously observing the precepts of Islām, the Sūfis regard other forms of faith with benevolence, as being also means—although, as they judge, inferior means—of attaining to the same realities which are hidden under the Muslim symbols; all true in a measure, but not the absolute truth to those who have—

"attained a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form."

M. Garcin de Tassy goes so far as to say, "*Ils pensent que la Bible et*

thus: 'What wilt thou that I do? Our Lord Jelāl suffereth me not; or otherwise I had a desire to make thee see the power of God, and what I am. But now draw near.' The Firengī dervish then clasped the merchant to his bosom, kissed him repeatedly on both cheeks, and then added: 'Look now, that thou mayest see my Lord and Teachér, my spiritual Master, and that thou mayest witness a marvel.' The merchant looked. He saw the Lord Jelāl immersed in a holy dance, chanting this hymn, and entranced with sacred music:—

"His kingdom: vast and pure: each sort its fitting place finds there
Cornelian, ruby, clod, or pebble be thou on His hill,
Believe, he seeks thee; disbelieve, He'll haply cleanse thee fair;
Be here a faithful Abu-Bekr; Firengī there—at will!"

"When the merchant happily reached Qonya on his return, he gave the salutations of the Firengī Saint, and his respects to Jelāl, and distributed much substance among the disciples. He settled at Qonya, and became a member of the Confraternity of the Pure Lovers of God."¹

The chapter which I shall next cite from *Jelāl's Acts* is interesting as illustrating his view of life and death:—

"It was once remarked to Jelāl with respect to the burial service for the dead, that, from the earliest times, it had been used for certain prayers and Qur'anic recitations to be said at the grave and around the corpse; but, that people could not understand why he had introduced into the ceremony

le Coran ont été seulement écrits pour l'homme qui se contente de l'apparence des choses, qui s'occupe de l'extérieur, pour le zâhir parast, comme ils le nomment, et non pour le sofî qui sonde le fond des choses."—*La Poésie Philosophique et Religieuse chez les Persans* (p. 12). I incline to think that this is too strongly put. But that is a question which cannot be discussed in a footnote. Possibly I may have to consider it on a future occasion.

¹ Page 32.

the practice of singing hymns during the procession towards the place of burial, which canonists had pronounced to be a mischievous innovation. Jelal replied : 'The ordinary reciters, by their services, bear witness that the deceased lived a Muslim. My singers, however, testify that he was a believer in and a lover of God.' He added also : 'Besides that, when the human spirit, after years of imprisonment in the cage and dungeon of the body, is at length set free, and wings its flight to the source whence it came, is not this an occasion for rejoicings, thanks, and dancings? The soul, in ecstasy, soars to the presence of the Eternal, and stirs up others to make proof of courage and self-sacrifice. If a prisoner be released from a dungeon and be clothed with honour, who would doubt that rejoicings are proper? So, too, the death of a Saint is an exactly parallel case.'¹

As a fitting complement to this, take the following account of the Saint's own death and burial, which will be a fitting conclusion, too, to this essay :—

"As he lay in his extreme sickness, there were earthquakes for seven days and nights, very severe, so that walls and houses were overthrown. On the seventh occasion, all his disciples were alarmed. He, however, calmly remarked, 'Poof earth! it is eager for a fat morsel!² It shall have one!' He then gave his last instructions to his disciples as follows :—'I recommend unto you the fear of God, in public and in private; abstemiousness in eating and in sleeping, as also in speaking; the avoidance of rebelliousness and of sin; constancy in fasting, continuous worship, and perpetual abstinence from fleshly lusts; long-suffering under the ill-treatment of all mankind; to shun the companionship of the light-minded and of the common herd; to associate with the righteous and with men of worth; for verily "the best of

¹ Page 67.

² A playful reference to his extreme emaciation.

mankind is he who benefiteth men," and "the best of speech is that which is short and to the purpose."

"The following is a prayer taught by Jelāl on his death-bed to one of his friends, to be used whenever affliction or care might weigh upon him:—

"O our Lord God, I breathe but for Thee, and I stretch forth my spirit towards Thee, that I may recite Thy doxologies abundantly, commemorating Thee frequently. O our Lord God, lay not on me an ailment that may make me forgetful to commemorate Thee, or lessen my yearning towards Thee, or cut off the delight I experience in reciting the litanies of Thy praise. Grant me not a health that may engender or increase in me presumptuous or thankless insolence. For Thy mercy's sake, O Thou Most Merciful of the compassionate! Amen."

"A friend was seated by Jelāl's pillow, and Jelāl leaned on that friend's bosom. Suddenly, a most handsome youth appeared at the door of the room, to the utmost astonishment of the friend.

"Jelāl arose, and advanced to receive the stranger. But the friend was quicker, and quietly asked his business. The stranger answered: 'I am 'Azrā'il, the angel of departure and separation. I am come, by the divine command, to inquire what commission the Master may have to entrust to me.'

"Blessed are the eyes that can perceive such sights!"

"The friend was near fainting at this answer. But he heard Jelāl call out, 'Come in, come in, thou messenger of my King. Do that which thou art bidden; and, God willing, thou shalt find me one of the patient.'

"He now told his attendants to bring a vessel of water, placed his two feet therein, and occasionally sprinkled a little on his breast and forehead, saying, 'My beloved (God) has proffered me a cup of poison (bitterness). From His hand I drink that poison with delight.'

"The singers and musicians now came in, and executed a

hymn, while the whole company of friends wept, and sobbed loudly.

"His son (Sultan Ve'ed) had been unremitting in his attentions. He wept and sobbed, he was reduced to a shadow. Jelāl therefore said to him: 'Bahā'u'd-Dīn, my son, I am better. Go and lie down a little. Rest thyself, and sleep awhile.' When he was gone, Jelāl indited his last ode.

"It is related that, after his death, when laid on his bier . . . as the washer, a loving and loved disciple, folded his arms over his breast, a tremor appeared to pass over the corpse, and the washer fell with his face on the lifeless breast, weeping. He felt his ear pulled by the dead Saint's hand, as an admonition. On this he fainted away, and in his swoon he heard a cry from heaven, which said to him, 'Ho, there! Verily the Saints of the Lord have nothing to fear, neither shall they sorrow. Believers die not; they merely depart from one habitation to another abode.'

"When the corpse was brought forth, all the men, women, and children, who flocked to the funeral procession, smote their breasts, rent their garments, and uttered loud lamentations. These mourners were of all creeds and of various nations; Jews and Christians, Turks, Romans, and Arabians, were among them. Each recited sacred passages, according to their several usages, from the Law, the Psalms, or the Gospel.

"The Muslims strove to drive away these strangers with blows of fist, or staff, or sword. They would not be repelled. A great tumult was the result. The Sultan, the heir-apparent, and the Perwāna all flew to appease the strife, together with the chief rabbis, the bishops, abbots, and others.

"It was asked of these later, why they mixed themselves up with the funeral of an eminent Muslim sage and Saint. They replied that they had learnt from him more of the mysteries shrouded in their Scriptures than they had ever

known before, and had found on him all the signs and qualities of a prophet and Saint, as set forth in those writings. . . . The Muslim leaders could make no answer. And so, in all honour, with every possible demonstration of love and respect, was he borne along, and at length laid in his grave. He had died as the sun went down, on Sunday, the fifth of the month Jumāda-'l-ākhir, A.H. 672 (16th December, A.D. 1273), being thus sixty-eight years of age.”¹

¹ Page 93.

V

Spinoza and Modern Thought

(I)

I PROPOSE to say something about the doctrine of Spinoza in its relation to certain well-marked tendencies of the modern mind. A brief account of the philosopher himself will be a fitting preliminary to the consideration of his philosophy, for his antecedents and personal history throw a flood of light upon his teaching. It was on November 24th, 1632, that he was born in Amsterdam, his parents being the descendants of Portuguese Jews, who had sought refuge in the Netherlands from the fury of the Inquisition. He appears to have been well instructed in the Hebrew humanities, a by no means contemptible instrument of education. As Dr. Ginsberg observes,¹ the Talmud embraces all possible aspects of Jewish culture in its points of contact with, as well as in its points of difference from, the culture of other civilisations, so that "the various conceptions of the cosmos by Platonism, Aristotelianism, Neo-Platonism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Scepticism "

¹ In his Introduction to his edition of Spinoza's *Ethic*.

would be revealed to the student by the arguments employed to combat them. His preceptor in his Talmudistic studies was the Rabbi Morteira, described as "a man celebrated among the Jews, and the least ignorant of the Rabbis of that time." Later on he acquired the Latin tongue, chiefly under the tuition of Franz Van der Ende, a physician of liberal sympathies and of considerable intellectual mark, who was eventually hanged in France for political intrigues. On arriving at man's estate he became known among his friends for opinions alien from the religious traditions dominant in the Jewish community, and in particular for those views of the Hebrew Sacred Books which were subsequently set forth by him in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, and which were regarded as heretical. Hence, after an unsuccessful attempt by some fanatic to murder him, he was cited to the synagogue, where he was accused of "the blackest and most enormous of crimes, contempt of the law," and on his failure to retract, was solemnly excommunicated. This was in 1656.

Baruch de Spinoza—he changed the name of Baruch for the Latin equivalent Benedict—was now twenty-four years old, and found himself face to face with the world, disinherited and penniless. The question which he asked himself was not how he might put money in his purse, but where man's chief good lay. To attain it was his one end and aim during the twenty years of life which remained to him. A wise regulation of the Hebrews prescribed that a Jew should learn some manual trade. Spinoza

had acquired the art of lens grinding, and was so skilful in it that, as Colerus,¹ his earliest and most authoritative biographer, relates, "he was applied to from all sides for his glasses, the sale of which provided enough for his needs." "It is almost incredible," we read in this good man's pleasant pages, "how sober and economical he was." "Nature is satisfied with little," he used to say, "and when she is content, I am so too." After sojourning for some time at Rijnsburg, near Leyden, he removed in 1664 to Voorburg, a suburb of the Hague, and thence, in 1670, to the Hague itself, where he dwelt in a small room for the rest of his life, endearing himself to his landlord and landlady—simple, honest Dutch folk—by the sweetness and gentleness of his disposition, and by the unclouded serenity of his temper. Most of his time was spent in his chamber, where, his daily wants provided for by his handicraft, he gave himself up to meditation on the philosophic problems which engrossed him. "Reason is my enjoyment," he would say, "and the aim I have in this life is joy and serenity."

He attained that aim. "He was perfectly happy : he has told us so : let us believe him on his word.

¹ The Latinised form of the German name Köhler. He was minister of the Lutheran congregation at the Hague from 1693 to 1707, and published his *Life of Spinoza* at Amsterdam in 1705. An English translation of it, which appeared in 1706, has been reprinted in an Appendix to Sir Frederick Pollock's *Spinoza : His Life and Philosophy*, with the well-merited encomium, "What gives his witness singular value is its freedom from all suspicion of designed panegyric. He detests the philosophy of Spinoza, but is too honest to slander his character as a man, or even to conceal his admiration for it."

He has done still better : he has left us his secret. Listen to the receipt of the ' Prince of Atheists ' for finding happiness. It is the love of God. To love God is to live in God. Life in God is the best and most perfect, because it is the most reasonable, the happiest, the fullest life : in a word, because it gives us more of being than any other life, and satisfies more completely the fundamental desire which constitutes our essence. . . . He was nothing, and wished to be nothing. The motto of the author of the *Imitation* ' Ama nesciri ' was his too. On several occasions he refused wealth on its way to him ; he desired only the bare necessities of life. The King of France offered him a pension ; he declined it. The Elector Palatine offered him a chair at Heidelberg [he declined that also]. He felt that his duty was to think. He thought, in truth, for humanity, whose ideas he forestalled by more than two centuries."¹

This greatest of modern Jews, cast off with bitter curses by those who sat in Moses' seat, still adhered to the faith of his fathers—*sub specie æternitatis*, he himself would probably have said. The claims of Christianity were, of course, weighed by him. He found them wanting. He regarded Christ—so we read in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*—as the highest manifestation of the Divine Wisdom : but the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation was, in St. Paul's phrase, " a stumbling block " to him. The assertion that God

¹ I need, perhaps, hardly say that I am quoting from Renan's Address at the Hague upon the occasion of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of Spinoza's death.

took on Him the nature of man he thought unintelligible—as unintelligible as the supposition that a circle should assume the nature of a square. He would, however, occasionally attend the offices of the Lutheran Church frequented by his host and hostess, and one of the persons he esteemed most was their minister, Cordes, the predecessor of his biographer, Colerus. He would tell the children to go to Divine service, and when they returned from the sermon would ask them how much they remembered of it. He almost always strongly seconded what the preacher had said. To his hostess, who on one occasion asked him if he thought she would be saved in the religion which she professed, he replied, "Your religion is a good one; you should not seek any other, nor doubt that yours will procure salvation if, in attaching yourself to piety, you at the same time live peacefully and tranquilly." Only two of his works appeared during his lifetime. In 1663 he published what a very competent critic has well described as "the most profound and accurate digest of the philosophy of Descartes in existence," and, in 1670, the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. He died on February 25th, 1677, as peacefully as he had lived.

(II)

And now let me go on to sketch briefly Spinoza's teaching. The two principal founts of it are the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and the *Ethic*, although

his minor works and his correspondence are of extreme value as illustrating and supplementing those treatises. The *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* need not detain us long. The first thirteen chapters of the work are occupied with the problems dealt with in our day by "the higher criticism," of which Spinoza may be regarded as one of the founders. In the fourteenth and fifteenth the nature of religious faith is considered, and the independence of philosophy from theology is strenuously maintained. This Spinoza judged the most important part of the treatise: "hæc quæ hic ostendimus præcipua sunt quæ in hoc tractatu intendo." The sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth chapters discuss the true principles of civil polity, and the twentieth vindicates the rights of civil freedom. In it occurs the following noble passage, in which we seem conscious of "the Spirit of the years to come, yearning to mix himself with Life."

The final end of the State consists not in dominating over men, restraining them by fear, subjecting them to the will of others, but, on the contrary, in permitting each one to live in all possible security—that is to say, in preserving intact the natural right of each to live without injury to himself and others. No; I say the State has not for its end the transformation of men from reasonable beings into animals or automata; it has for its end so to act that its citizens should in security develop soul and body, and make free use of their reason. . . . Hence the true end of the State is liberty.

This—not the tawdry tissue of truisms and sophisms promulgated in 1789—this is the real declaration of the rights of man.

The great object, we may say, of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* was to vindicate man's prerogative to think and judge and speak, within rational limits, according to his capacity. It is interesting to note that this treatise embodies, as there is good ground to believe, Spinoza's apology for himself against the sentence of excommunication which cast him out of the Jewish community. Of course, no competent scholar would now agree with all his speculations regarding the Books of the Old Testament, but Renan is not without warrant in saying, "He foresaw, with wondrous sagacity, the great results of the critical exegesis destined, a hundred and twenty-five years later, to bring out the true meaning of the noblest productions of Hebrew genius."

It is not necessary to dwell further here on the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. The full and ordered exposition of Spinoza's philosophy is contained in the *Ethic* to which, as has been well observed, the former treatise is "a kind of detached preface." Sir Frederick Pollock, with his usual perspicacity and precision, tells us "the first and leading idea in Spinoza's philosophy is that of the unity and uniformity of the world. Nature, as conceived by him, includes thought no less than things, and the order of nature knows no interruption. Again, there is not a world of thought opposed to, and interfering with, a world of things; we have everywhere the same reality under different aspects. Nature is one as well as uniform." Spinoza holds that the foundation of all existence is

substance, by which word he means¹ pretty much what Aquinas meant by it, self-existent being—ens per se subsistens—or, to speak in the philosophical language of a later age, the noumenal reality underlying phenomena. He holds, further, that there is only one substance, eternal, necessary : and that is the Infinite and All Perfect Being, God, of whom everything that exists is an Attribute,² or an affection of some Attribute, modified in this manner or in that. The Divine Attributes he regards as infinite—relatively, not absolutely—two only of them being apprehensible by us, extension and thought, from each of which is derived an infinity of finite modes. He conceives of God as infinite extension and infinite thought : not finite extension which is properly corporeal, not an extension which implies length, size, depth, diversity, mobility, but the idea, the archetype of extension : and not this or that thought, but thought in itself, thought altogether positive, thought in its plenitude, fundamentally absolute and perfect. All material things in the world are for him modes of God's Attribute of extension ; all ideas or conceptions are modes of God's Attribute of thought. In God, then, Spinoza finds the synthesis of the primal realities of mind and matter. From God all flows out ; to Him all

¹ His own definition is, "By Substance I understand that which is in itself and is conceived by itself : that is, whose concept needs not the concept of another thing for it to be formed from."

² It may be well to give here two more of his definitions : "By Attribute I understand that which intellect perceives concerning Substance as constituting the Essence thereof." "By mode I understand the affections of Substance, or that which is in somewhat else through which also it is conceived."

returns; of Him everything is a form; He is identical with Nature, yet not the same; He is the *Natura naturans*,¹ no more to be confounded with the *Natura naturata* than the source with the rivulet, than time with eternity. A general diffusive Divine life—"Omnia, diversis tamen gradibus, animata sunt"—throughout the universe was for Spinoza the first of facts. *Throughout the universe*: not merely in this little solar system of ours, but everywhere in the illimitable and unthinkable succession of worlds, ever proceeding from God. Further, he holds that from the infinite power, and infinite nature of God, all has *necessarily* followed, or by the same necessity does follow, just as from eternity it has followed, and will follow, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. Nor will he allow that such necessity is a limitation of God's freedom: that it makes Him subject to fate. "This," he says, in one of his letters, "is manifestly false. For I have affirmed that all things follow of inevitable necessity from God's nature, nor otherwise than all affirm that it follows from God's nature that He understands Himself. This, surely, no one denies to follow necessarily from God's nature, and yet no one conceives that God understands Himself under compulsion of fate, but rather that He does so with freedom, though necessarily." God is free because no power external to Himself has power over Him; absolutely free, because He is absolutely law to Himself. His works are what they are, because He is what He is: "He cannot deny Himself." On this

¹ See *Ethic*, Part I., Prop. XXIX. Schol.

chord of necessity Spinoza strikes mightily. All, he insists, is from God, not by design, or for the sake of an end; no, but necessarily. "He exists for no end; He acts for no end; but as He has no principle or end of existence, so has He no principle or end of action."¹ There is nothing in the nature of things which is contingent; all is necessary, all eternal, because of the necessity of the infinite nature and infinite power of the One Eternal, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Thus does he transform the word of the Hebrew law-giver: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is One Lord." One, yes, and All: *ἓν καὶ πᾶν*. Such is his conception of the Divine immanence: "Deus est summe constans in operibus suis."

Of the five books into which the *Ethic* is divided, the first is inscribed *De Deo*, and is devoted to the high theme which we have been considering. He adds to it an appendix, beginning with the words "His Dei naturam ejusque proprietates explicui," in which he combats the popular conception of final causes. He considers it to arise from anthropomorphic notions of Deity. We think that the Infinite and Eternal is altogether such an one as ourselves. Nay, we are not only anthropomorphic, but anthropocentric, and erect ourselves and our infinitesimal interests into the measure of Divine intention. Spinoza was, of course, confronted with the difficulty:—If God

¹ Part IV., Pref. "A final cause," he continues, "is nothing but human desire, in so far as this is considered as the principle, or primary cause, of anything."

is what you describe Him, the cause of all things which have reality, is He not, then, the author of evil? He evades or transcends—whichever is the proper word—that difficulty by maintaining¹ that the notion of evil exists only in consequence of the inadequacy of our ideas, which, it may be noted, is the doctrine of Hegel. For him, evil is not a positive thing; it is relative to man;² the essence of it is not real at all, or, in his own words, “does not express real being,” and, therefore, God—the author of all reality³—is not the cause of it. He writes to his correspondent William de Blyenburg:—

“We speak of this or that man having done a wrong thing, when we compare him with a general standard of humanity: but inasmuch as God neither perceives things in such abstract manner, nor forms to Himself such kinds of generic definitions, and since there is no more reality in anything than God has assigned to it, it follows, surely, that the absence of good exists only in respect of men’s understandings, and not of God’s.”

Blyenburg objects: “If this be so, bad men fulfil God’s purpose as well as good.”

“It is true,” Spinoza replies, “they fulfil it, but not

¹ *Ethic*, Part IV., Prop. I.XIV.

² Sir Frederick Pollock, who points out (p. 49) that Spinoza’s conception of good and evil as relative, and having place only in finite intellects, had been enunciated centuries before by Maimonides, is perhaps not aware that this is the doctrine of St. Augustine also.

³ As Sir Frederick Pollock puts it (p. 47): “Spinoza holds that every really existing thing, if we consider it apart from its relation to other things, is perfect, as far as its existence goes: this equivalence of *reality* and *perfection* is one of the keynotes of Spinoza’s metaphysic.”

as the good, or as well as the good; nor are they to be compared with these. The better a thing or a person is, the more there is in him of God's spirit, and the more he expresses God's will, while the bad, being without that Divine love which arises from the knowledge of God, and through which alone we are called (in respect of our understandings) His servants, are but as instruments in the hands of the artificer: they serve unconsciously, and are consumed in the service."

And this brings us to Spinoza's doctrine concerning man. The second part of his *Ethic* is headed *De Mente*, and treats of the human mind. The third and fourth, which bear, respectively, the titles *De Affectibus* and *De Servitute Humana*, discuss the nature of man's affections, emotions, passions, and depict the misery and thralldom of those who are governed by irrational desires; while the fifth, called *De Libertate Humana*, dwells on the glorious liberty of such as are led by reason. The body and soul are for Spinoza merely modes of one Divine Substance, the body expressing the Divine Essence under the aspect of extension, the mind under the aspect of thought; or, as Sir Frederick Pollock more fully states it:—

"The human mind, or man as a thinking being, is a mode of thought, and part of the infinite intellect of God. As such it must have its correlate or 'object' in extension, for the reality of Substance is expressed in extension as in thought. This object is nothing else but the human body, the existence of which is

made known to us by our experience of its affections." "Body and mind are the same thing—*una et eadem res*—and differ only in aspects. Their parallelism and mutual independence is not a mystery but an elementary fact."

To the question, then, What is man? Spinoza replies: A transitory form of the Eternal Thought. And, as we saw just now, the problem which he put before himself on starting in life was where man's chief good lies. That problem he endeavours to solve in the *Ethic*. For him the primordial law of being is being; the fundamental want of man is to prove, affirm, and augment his own existence; we thirst for "more life and fuller." This is the real meaning of the words—they have been much misunderstood—in the Eighteenth Proposition of the Fourth Part of the *Ethic*: "*Cupiditas est ipsa hominis essentia; hoc est conatus quo homo in suo esse perseverare conatur.*" Neither self-preservation, in the vulgar sense of the term, nor Benthamite utility is here enthroned as the first principle of action. The "esse" of man spoken of as his real being is life in accordance with the laws of his nature, and "reason which," as the philosopher goes on to tell us, in the Scholion, "requires nothing opposed to nature, demands that every person should seek . . . what is truly profitable to him, should desire everything that really leads man to greater perfection." The instrument of this greater perfection is virtue, which, he insists, in words almost identical with a well-known saying of Butler's, "means acting in accordance with

those laws of our own nature." But that is hidden from the eyes of most men. Spinoza thought, as the Buddha did, that men's errors and miseries arise from inadequate knowledge, from not knowing and understanding when they might and should know and understand. His doctrine of cognition is of much importance. There are, he tells us, three ways in which we may know things: we may know them by hearsay or from general experience; we may know them by ratiocination; we may know them by intuition, which is immediate and complete perception, adequate and free from error. And this last kind of knowledge, he holds, is present in the mind of God, so far as it constitutes the essence of the mind of man, and must necessarily, therefore, be objectively true, for, in so far as any mind perceives things truly, it is part of the infinite intellect of God, whence the conclusion of necessity follows that the clear and distinct ideas of the mind are as true as those of God.¹

Now, the human mind, Spinoza writes, "acts, at times, and at times suffers"—*quædam agit, quædam vero patitur*."² In so far as it is influenced by false or

¹ *Ethic*, Part II., Prop. XLIII.

² *Ibid.*, Part III., Prop. I. Or, if we may so translate, "is sometimes an agent, sometimes a victim." This distinction between action and passion is an essential part of Spinoza's philosophy. In the Second Definition of the Third Part he writes, "I say that we *act* when anything is done either within us or without us of which we are the adequate cause: that is to say, when from our nature anything follows, either within us or without us, which by that nature alone can be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand, I say that we *suffer* when anything is done within us or when anything follows from our nature, of which we are not the cause except partially."

inadequate ideas, it is the slave of passion : in so far as it is governed by reason, it is free, self-directed, self-controlled. Human perfection then—our true aim—is life according to reason. “By good,” Spinoza explains, “I shall understand what we are assured is a means for approaching more and more nearly to the pattern of human nature which we set before ourselves ; and by evil what we are assured is a hindrance to our copying the same pattern.”¹ Sir Frederick Pollock well puts it, “The ethical notions of good and evil are the notions of perfection and imperfection, as applied to the human character and conduct by means of a normal idea or standard of man.”² A soul enfranchised from the dominion of the senses and led by reason, abounds the most in adequate ideas ; and so far as it is made up of such ideas, it lives in the Divine Being, who is the last link of the chain. To live in the enjoyment of being is to have every desire engrossed by one single thought, the hope of attaining to God. This is to love God and to dwell in Him. For the intellectual love of God, which is man’s highest happiness, necessarily springs from the knowledge of God :³ it is “the love of an Immutable and Eternal Object, of which we are really partakers : a love which cannot be vitiated by the defects common in love, but which will always become greater and greater, occupy

¹ *Ethic*, Part IV., Pref. “With regard to good and evil,” he tells us, “these terms indicate nothing positive in things considered in themselves, nor are they anything else than modes of thought or notions which we form from the comparison of one thing with another.”

² Page 251.

³ *Ethic*, Part V., Prop. XXXII.

the largest part of the mind, and thoroughly affect it."¹

To sum up. All beings desire life, seek to energise, thirst for fuller and ampler existence. Man, as whole in himself, gathers these goods only from the Absolute Good which is God: the love of Whom is the extinction of lower loves,² the knowledge of Whom is perfect freedom. This is the highest virtue, the power of God in the soul; this is man's true blessedness and is to be sought for its own sake, not for any advantage which it will bring. "Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself."³ It is nothing else but the tranquillity of mind ("animi acquiescentia") which springs from the intuitive knowledge

¹ *Ethic*, Prop. XX. I cannot in the least agree with Sir Frederick Pollock (p. 280) that Spinoza's "love of God is nothing else, than the rational contemplation of the order of the world, and of human nature as part thereof." I think, with Novalis, Goethe, Cousin, Renan, that so far from being nothing else but this, it is not this at all, but something very different, of which Sir Frederick Pollock's want of comprehension—or even apprehension—is quite unintelligible to me. I believe that when Spinoza said "the love of God," he meant—the love of God: and I feel bound to add that Sir Frederick Pollock's blindness to this patent fact (as I must account it) seriously mars the value of his very learned book.

² Compare Cardinal Newman's well-known lines:—

"Poor is our sacrifice whose souls
Are lighted from above;
We offer what we cannot keep,
What we have ceased to love."

³ *Ethics* Part V., Prop. XLII. Compare St. Augustine: "Beata quippe vita est gaudium de veritate. Hoc est gaudium de te qui veritas es, Deus illuminatio mea, salus faciei meae, Deus meus." "Ipsa est beata vita gaudere ad te, de te, propter te; ipsa est et non est altera."—*S. Augustini Confes.*, Lib. X.

of God.¹ And note the philosopher's corollary: "He who loves God will not desire that God should love him in return:"² love him, that is, with any partial or particular affection; for to desire this would be to desire that God, for a man's sake, should change His everlasting nature, and become lower than Himself."

It will be seen, then, that while the principle from which Spinoza starts is that God is the ground of all things, the goal which he reaches is the knowledge and consequent love of God. The idea with which he concludes his *Ethic* is that our highest self-consciousness is but God's consciousness of Himself. This is the blessedness of a life according to reason—to have an intuition of God in all things. And so "men who are governed by reason," he writes, "desire nothing for themselves which they do not desire for other men, and, therefore, they are just, faithful, honourable."³ Nay, further: "He who lives according to the guidance of reason, strives as much as possible to repay the hatred, anger or contempt of others towards himself with love and generosity."⁴ More: "The love of God cannot be soiled by any sentiment of envy or jealousy, but is the more nourished the larger the number of men we represent to ourselves as united with God by the same tie of love."⁵ Thus, by a strange route, indeed, does Spinoza arrive at that love of God and love of man, whereon, as a Greater than he has said, "hang all

¹ *Ethic*, Part IV., Appendix.

² *Ibid.*, Part V., Prop. XIX.

³ *Ibid.*, Part IV., Prop. XVIII., Scholion.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Part IV., Prop. XLVI.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Part V., Prop. XX.

the law and the prophets" of his race. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself," is the conclusion of the whole matter for him, also.

But although the practical conclusion which Spinoza reaches as to man's Highest Good and true rule of action may be expressed in the language of Judaism and of Christianity, that, assuredly, cannot be said of his view whether of the Divine or of human nature. It is alien from both those religions, in all stages of their development. We have seen that when he ascribes freedom to God, it is in a very different sense from what would be admitted by either Jewish or Christian theologians. Similarly, he speaks of God's understanding—we must remember that for him will and understanding are the same—with a caveat, because, as he insists, understanding, in general, is a determination of thought, and every determination is a negation. He holds that there is nothing in common between the Divine intelligence and the human, any more than there is between the Dog which is a sign of the Zodiac, and the barking animal in the streets bearing that name. Again, his determinism is far removed both from the teaching, whether of Moses and the Prophets or of the Apostles and Evangelists. "Men think themselves free solely because they are conscious of their own actions and ignorant of the causes whereby they are determined,"¹ he tells us. It is certainly a denial

¹ *Ethic*, Part III., Prop. II., Schol. He unfolds his doctrine here very fully and clearly.

of what is popularly understood by free will : but, as certainly, he leaves room for human choice, design, self-direction. "*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.*" Why? "Because," he answers, in effect, "you do not really *know* the excellence of the better things : if you adequately understood it, you would follow them." Of that conviction of having done amiss and dealt wickedly, that accusatory voice within, commonly called the sense of guilt, which plays so important a part in Judaism and in Christianity, Spinoza says nothing. The theological conceptions of sin, repentance, and the forgiveness of sin, have no place in his system. He holds with the Buddha, "Two things in the world are immutably fixed . that good actions bring happiness and that bad actions bring misery" : *immutably* : there is no escape, according to these teachers, from the consequences of our deeds.

Again, As to the supernatural, Spinoza's attitude towards it is that of a modern rationalising theologian—say, for example, Pfeleiderer, whose last book chances to lie on my table as I write. His language in places is ambiguous ; but there can be no doubt, I think, that he judged the miracles recorded in the Old Testament to be anthropomorphic myths. As regards the New, he tells us, expressly, that while he takes the narrative given in them of Christ's death and burial, literally, he construes their accounts of His resurrection and ascension, allegorically.

Lastly. In a sense, he allows the immortality of the soul :¹ but in a very different sense from that which

¹ He maintains "The human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed

the words bear in modern Judaism or in Christianity. It would take too long to discuss here his subtle and obscure doctrine on this matter. I can only briefly state it. The soul, it will be remembered, is for Spinoza the idea of the body. But it is a Divine idea, an eternal mode of an eternal understanding of God : and it lives in the Divine Being, so far as it is made up of ideas adequate to that Being. So far as it envelops the actual existence of the body, it is mortal. The senses, the memory, the imagination—faculties suited to a successive and changing existence—perish with the body, carrying with them our inadequate ideas, our passions, our prejudices, our errors : but reason, that is our adequate ideas, remains : for by reason we perceive things under the form of eternity. The soul, then, which is governed by reason, and which, even in this world, lives in God, may say “*multaque pars mei vitabit Libitinam.*” Death takes from such a soul nothing of real worth. With souls dominated by vain images and by passions, it is otherwise. Death is not for them a simple accident, but touches the very centre of their being. Thus, as Saisset remarks, “Spinoza re-discovers, in his own way, ingeniously though incompletely, that great law of remunerative and retributive justice, one of the holiest beliefs of the human race.”¹

with the body, but something of it remains which is eternal.” *Ethic*, Part V., Prop. XXIII., and in Prop. XXXIII. of the same Part, he lays it down that “the third kind of knowledge is eternal, and therefore the love which springs from it is necessarily eternal.”

¹ *Précurseurs et Disciples de Descartes*, p. 241. Saisset's pages on this subject are very admirable, and will repay careful perusal. It has

(III)

So much must suffice as a sketch of Spinoza's philosophy. Of the sources whence he derived it, little need be said here. He was, of course, a disciple of Descartes, and, indeed, took up philosophical problems where Descartes left them. Modern research has established, beyond question, his obligations to Giordano Bruno. He was certainly well acquainted with Maimonides and the Jewish rationalists who, again, were deeply influenced by the Alexandrian mystics. But what he derived from these and other thinkers, he completely assimilated and made his own. Dr. Flint is well warranted in saying, "His system is one of the most original which the history of philosophy presents." Not less original is the shape into which he cast it. Like Kant, he discerned that mathematics, at all events, give certainty, and he concluded that if philosophical truth is to be found, it must be by the aid of mathematics. And so he puts aside experience and induction, and relies solely on the geometrical method, applying it, unhesitatingly, even to human passions, and "treating the soul and its affections as though they were lines

been said, "Spinoza's doctrine leads consistently to the conclusion (which, however, he does not himself explicitly state) that the 'intelligent' souls only, that is the souls of the wise, are immortal, but not those of other men, since the intelligent soul only is a part of God : and it compels the inference that the essence of the body also is imperishable as, according to Spinoza, extension is no less an eternal attribute of that Substance than thinking, since both are parallel and differ only in conception."—Kalisch, *Path and Goal*, p. 402.

and superficies and solids." No doubt we must trace here the influence of Descartes. And from Descartes he unquestionably derived his first principle that nothing should be received as true which is not founded on clear and distinct ideas. Hence he grounds his philosophic edifice on what he deems to be truths intuitively known and self-evident—"simplicissimæ ideæ," he calls them: and these he places before us in his Definitions and Axioms. The most important of them is the idea of the Infinite and Perfect Being, the Self-Existence, God. I quoted, in a previous page, his Definition of God. It is really the foundation of his *Ethic*—which we may agree with Sir Frederick Pollock in calling "that splendid effort of constructive genius."

No one can deny that Spinoza's system is evolved by strictly sequacious reasoning from his Definitions and Axioms. But there are two fatal objections to his method. One is indicated by a profound remark of Heine: "No such definitions can be given in philosophy as are given in mathematics. The definitions in mathematics are not discursive, but intuitive: that is, they can be demonstrated to perception. What are *called* definitions in philosophy are presented merely experimentally and hypothetically, the true and correct definition appearing only at the end as a resultant."¹ With this agrees Kant's pungent saying—which, indeed, Heine quotes: "In philosophy the mathematical form produces nothing but card-houses." Further: Spinoza's "simplicissimæ ideæ,"

¹ *Über Deutschland*, Werke, Vol. V., p. 191.

embodied in his Definitions and Axioms, are very far from appearing to some powerful and disciplined minds as intuitively known, self evident, and compelling assent.¹ Take, for example, his Definition of God, which I will again quote. "God is a Substance, constituted by an infinity of Attributes, each of which expresses an eternal and infinite Essence." No doubt, to Spinoza this was a truth clear as the sun. To many masters of philosophic thought it is a baseless assumption. Kant, for instance, would have so regarded it: he would have pronounced it a transcendental hypothesis concerning what is quite beyond human knowledge: the very words, "Substance," "Attributes," "Infinite," would have stamped it for him as leading to invincible antinomies. I am not discussing the question whether Kant was right or wrong in so holding. I merely adduce him as an example of a great thinker to whom Spinoza's primary proposition was not self-evident, or evident at all. No doubt, if we grant to Spinoza the assumptions with which he sets out, his conclusions necessarily follow. But Berkeley was not unwarranted when he said, "Spinoza's demonstrations are after such a manner that one can demonstrate anything."

To say this, however, is not to deny the precious things which are to be found in Spinoza. What open mind can now be insensible to the grandeur of his

¹ A searching and severe criticism of Propositions I.-VI. in the First Part of Spinoza's *Ethic* will be found in Appendix II. to Boedder's *Natural Theology*.

idealistic theories, to the winningness of the mystical and religious side of his teaching? The men of his own generation, and of many generations afterwards, were, indeed, insensible to these things, and denounced him as an Atheist and the Prince of Atheists. It is true that the word "atheist" was, in those times, employed very vaguely as a conveniently emphatic term of theological abuse. A century before, it was so applied to Erasmus by his Lutheran opponents. But even at the present day there are controversialists, presumably not unacquainted with Spinoza's writings, who thus describe him. I suppose the best excuse for them has been indicated by Lewes. "*Logically*, there is but a trivial distinction between Spinoza's Acosmism, which makes God the one universal Being, and Atheism, which makes the cosmos the one universal Existence. *Spiritually*, the difference is profound. His Acosmism may denote what is scarcely distinguishable from Atheism: it connotes something utterly opposed to Atheism." The term Pantheism had not been invented in Spinoza's time: now, there are careful and exact thinkers, of various schools, who charge him with it. It might be thought that his distinction between the *Natura naturans* and the *Natura naturata*, would be a sufficient vindication from the charge.¹ But, in truth, Pantheism is a very vague word, covering a variety of doctrines.

Labels are necessary in the intellectual province as elsewhere; but, for myself, I confess to small sympathy

¹ It is notable that Martineau and Trendelenburg, though holding very different views of Spinoza, agree that he cannot be called a Pantheist.

with those who busy themselves in affixing them. "Pantheism," Carlyle exclaimed on one occasion, in reply to Sterling, "and suppose it were Pot-theism if the thing is true?" Long years passed away before men set themselves to ask what truth there might be in Spinoza's writings. Colerus relates that "his works were scarce published but God raised up, to His glory and the defence of the Christian religion, several champions who confuted them with all the success they could hope for." It may, however, be inferred from the account which he furnishes of the performances of these champions, that either they did not give themselves the trouble of trying to comprehend the thinker whom they combated, or that they failed in the attempt. In the first half of the eighteenth century few looked into his writings. People, for the most part, got their notions about him from Bayle's *Dictionary*, which was published in 1696. Certainly Fénelon, who undertook to refute him, did not understand him—nay, probably, had never read him. Beyond question the doctrine which he assails as Spinoza's is not Spinoza's at all. Of the diatribe against him which we find in Massillon's *Sermon for the First Sunday in Lent*, we may say with Janet, "It is explicable only on the assumption that the name of Spinoza was as familiar as his writings were unknown." Indeed, Lewes put the matter not amiss: "For several generations his name was another name for Atheism and deliberate yielding of the soul to Satan." Voltaire was of opinion—correctly, no doubt—that "not ten persons throughout Europe would read him through

from beginning to end." Assuredly, of this small number, Voltaire, who accounted him a concealed Atheist, cannot have been one. The earliest vindication of him seems to have come from a Catholic ecclesiastic, the Abbé de Ligna, who, writing in 1760, declared "He is no Atheist, as is commonly supposed, but an ultra-spiritualist: the world and material creatures were for him merely dreams of divinity."

But it is to Lessing that what we may call the new view of Spinoza, now generally accepted by scholars, is chiefly due. He avowed himself a disciple of the despised Hebrew sage, and affirmed that the formula *ἐν καὶ πάντων* sums up philosophy. The saying went abroad. Spinoza's long forgotten works were republished and largely read: and soon this thinker, so long reviled as "a wretch, a pestilence, an imp of hell, the most wicked Atheist that ever lived," was revered as "the seer who possessed the highest God-consciousness of his day." Novalis, using—no doubt without knowing it—an Oriental phrase, called him "a God-intoxicated man." Herder and Schleiermacher sought to regard him as a crypto-Christian—which assuredly he was not. Hegel declared, "Unless you have laid hold on Spinoza, you have no philosophy at all"—"Du hast entweder den Spinozismus oder gar keine Philosophie." The Naturphilosophie taught by Fichte and popularised by Schelling is essentially Spinozistic. There is a quaint saying of Heine's, "All our modern philosophers, perhaps unconsciously, see through the glasses which Spinoza ground."¹ Of Goethe Heine

¹ There is a curiously Spinozistic passage in the *Critique of Pure*

truly asserts he “ was utterly given up to Spinoza, he was the Spinoza of poetry : in his ballads the doctrine of Spinoza has broken from the mathematical chrysalis and flutters round as Goethean song.”¹ The rehabilitation, if I may use the word, of Spinoza in France was chiefly due to Victor Cousin, who writes of him, “ I am no Spinozist, and in my lectures I have spoken of Spinoza’s system with more severity than indulgence : but he is far from being an Atheist. He is so full of the sense of God that he loses therein the sense of man. The *Ethic* is, in substance, a mystic hymn, an aspiration and a sigh of the soul to Him who alone can say, ‘ I am That I am.’ Spinoza is an Indian Mouni, a Persian Sufi, an enthusiastic monk . and the author who most resembles this so-called Atheist is the unknown author of the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*.”²

What Victor Cousin did for Spinoza in France was done in England by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who regarded the *Ethic* as one of the three great works since the introduction of Christianity, the other two being Bacon’s *Novum Organum* and Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Unquestionably, there are traces of Spinozistic thought in Wordsworth, due, doubtless, to Coleridge’s influence, as in that fine passage—

Reason (Rosenkrantz, ed., p. 450), in which Kant apparently accepts the conception of God (*Eus perfectissimum*) as the sum of all realities ; but there is no reason to believe that he had read Spinoza.

¹ I remember certain words of Goethe, “ I feel myself very near to Spinoza, though his soul is much deeper and purer than mine ” : but I have mislaid the reference.

² See the charming paper in Vol. II. of his *Philosophic Fragments*, entitled “ Spinoza et la Synagogue des Juifs Portugais à Amsterdam,” from which my compressed extract is taken.

"a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns;
And the round ocean and the living air :
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

Wordsworth here struck the keynote of much of the music of more recent English poets who have been attracted by Spinoza's mystical monism, although in many instances, doubtless, they have had no direct knowledge of what has been called his "wonderful attempt at spiritualising Nature by entwining her laws with the necessity of the Divine Being—the inherent cause of the world."

But, moreover, Spinoza's principle of the unity of all experience undoubtedly harmonises with that trend of natural science, in these latter days, which Mr. Herbert Spencer clearly discerned and which led him to rear the imposing edifice of his "Synthetic Philosophy." Indeed, this synthetic philosophy may, not unjustly, be described as a huge system of speculative physics. I have examined it at length elsewhere,¹ the conclusion to which I was led being that its portentous generalisations, with their integrations and disintegrations, are far from effecting that unification of all knowledge at which Mr. Spencer aimed, and that, in fact, he leaves "the mystery of the immeasurable world" pretty much where he found it. I gladly, however, paid my poor tribute to the energy and perseverance of which his vast volumes are the outcome, to the value of the immense mass of facts which

¹ See *The Great Enigma*, pp. 117-199.

he so diligently collected, to the large elements of truth contained in many of his hypotheses, to the validity of some of his generalisations and to the plausibility of others. Of course, the most important of these generalisations is exhibited by his doctrine of the Persistence of Force (it must not be forgotten that he uses the phrase in a double sense) which is the foundation of his philosophy. In an interesting little book which lies before me as I write, it is contended that this doctrine receives support from what is now known about radio-activity, and from the newest theory of matter based thereon. No doubt that is so. But I must demur when the author goes on to speak of "the Spencer-Spinoza school," which "regards mind and not-mind as manifestations of one reality."¹ Unquestionably monism may be predicated of both Spinoza and Spencer. But there are radical differences between them, some of which I will indicate, as the phrase "the Spencer-Spinoza school" would certainly mislead the ill-instructed.

First, then, Spencer, as we are all aware, affirms that self-existence is unthinkable, and that the Ultimate Reality is unknowable. Spinoza, in Prop. XLVII. of the Second Part of the *Ethic*, categorically asserts, "The human mind possesses an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God": he builds his whole system on the knowledge

¹ The interesting passage in Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography*, where he tells us "the thought that consciousness, in some rudimentary form, is omnipresent was borne in upon me," no doubt recalls Spinoza's dictum: "Omnia, diversis tamen gradibus, animata sunt."

and consequent love of the Infinite and Perfect Being—the Self-Existing Substance. Spencer teaches that the Attributes of the Absolute, if It have any, are inconceivable. Spinoza that It has infinite Attributes, of which two—Thought and Extension—are known to us. Spencer asserts that “the deepest truths we can reach,” are simply statements of “the widest uniformities in our experience of the relations of matter, motion and force”: Spinoza that “the highest kind of knowledge proceeds from an adequate idea of some Attribute of God to an adequate knowledge of the nature of things,” which knowledge is *sub specie æternitatis*. Spencer, confounding the desired with the desirable, has transmuted ethics into physics: Spinoza, holding fast to the old distinction between *bonum honestum* and *bonum delectabile*, places man’s true happiness in virtue—not, please note, in agreeable feeling as the result of virtue—and exhibits the intellectual love of God as the first of virtues, and, indeed, as virtue’s sum. Spencer materialises spirit: Spinoza spiritualises matter. Surely these are differences—it would be easy to add to the catalogue—which are fatal to the phrase “the Spencer-Spinoza school.”

I am fond of quoting that saying of Novalis, “Man consists in truth.” And we may be sure that any doctrine which prevails widely, and subdues the minds of generations, owes its success not to the errors but to the verities in it. What, then, is the deep, underlying truth which has given Spinoza his hold upon the intellect of Europe, in these latter days, which

has made him the teacher of the masters of modern thought? I suppose it is the doctrine of the Divine Immanence,¹ which, whatever exception may be rightly taken to his statement of it, is really a development of one of the deepest utterances in the Old Testament: "We shall say much and yet shall want words: but the sum of our words is, 'He is all.'"² It is not too much to assert that in Spinoza's time this truth was largely obscured in the general mind of Europe. There can be no question that in our age what we know concerning matter emphatically points to it. The old materialistic view of matter (if I may so express myself) as merely extension and solidity, is gone for ever. We know that matter is impermanent, and that it is in continual flux. We are told, more or less confidently, by Professors of physical science, that it is "the transient expression of a transient electrical relation." That is a statement which I am

¹ The writer whom I just now quoted speaks of "the sublime truth first perceived by Spinoza that mind and matter are the warp and the woof of what the Earth spirit in *Faust* calls 'the living garment of God.'" I do not quite know what is meant by "the warp and the woof" in this passage: the adverb "first" is, however, unquestionably erroneous. The oldest religious system historically known to us, the Egyptian, unquestionably had the conception of Divine Immanence, and we may say the same of the earliest form of the Aryan religion. I add that the magnificent verses of *Faust* referred to are quite compatible with Christian—or Jewish—orthodoxy. Gretchen was right:

"Das ist alles recht schön und gut :
Ungefähr sagt das der Pfarrer auch
Nur mit ein bischen andern Worten."

² *Ecclesiasticus*, XLIII., 29. I quote the Douai version, which correctly represents the original Greek, τὸ πᾶν ἐστὶ αὐτός: the Vulgate has "ipse est in omnibus."

not competent to judge.. But every day confirms me in the opinion which I expressed more than twenty years ago: "I believe that the old wall of partition between spirit and matter is cracking in all directions: I think I already hear the sound of the trumpets before whose blast it is doomed to fall. I believe further that few shall come to recognise a thinking substance of which thought is the foundation, not the resultant—a view which was practically admitted in the old scholastic system, where the potentiality of so-called matter to put on fresh qualities and to become spiritualised was allowed, although but slightly analysed." ¹

For myself, then, although I say with Victor Cousin "I am no Spinozist," I am quite ready to allow that spirit alone is substance, that matter is a manifestation of spirit, and that, as divorced from spirit, matter is illusory. This, indeed, is merely a translation into the speech of our day of the teaching of Aquinas that matter (*materia prima*) is not a substance, cannot exist by itself, is *pene nihil*, and is susceptible of endless transformations, all of which are due to higher and immaterial energies. It appears to me that the true answer to that capital error which identifies God with the world, is furnished by the element of truth latent and distorted therein; the truth taught by Plato to the men of Athens, "All is full of divinity, full of soul," *πάντα πλήρη θεῶν, πλήρη ψυχῆς*, and recalled to them by St. Paul in his sermon on Areopagus, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." The distinction drawn by Krause between

¹ *Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*, p. 340.

Pantheism and what he calls Panentheism, is most solid and most profound. It is one thing to say that all is God (ἐν καὶ πᾶν), and quite another to say that all is in God (πᾶν ἐν Θεῷ). It is "vain wisdom all and false philosophy," which ignores or derides that distinction. This is no new doctrine. St. Athanasius, for example, though the "Omnia, diversis tamen gradibus, animata sunt" of Spinoza would have sounded strange to him, most assuredly would have granted the existence of a spiritual element in all things, animate and inanimate. He would even have said—indeed, he has virtually said—that the law which shows itself in the inorganic world, finds its perfection among created things in man as λογικός, whereby he reflects, in different degrees of perfection, the Divine Λόγος. Shall we get beyond this teaching? Surely the mystics are right when they speak of the *docta ignorantia* which is the last word alike of philosophy, of religion, and of physics. "Deveni in altitudinem maris et silui."

VI

Modern Pessimism

(I)

GEORGE SAND, in her *History of my Life*, tells us how during the solitude of her early womanhood at Nohant she had yielded to the taste of the century, which was to shut oneself up in an egoistic sorrow, to imagine oneself René or Obermann, to attribute to oneself an exceptional sensibility by reason of sufferings unknown to the vulgar herd. When she was thirty her horizon enlarged. She came to Paris, the blissful Promised Land of her waking dreams, to live that artist life in which she had hoped, above all things, to find peace with herself. Her illusion was soon dispelled. It was then that she was brought, for the first time, face to face with the darker problems of existence, and saw the world as it is. And in the view of its great objective evil her merely subjective sorrow was merged, as a rivulet lost in ocean.

“One quickly tires (she writes) of contemplating oneself. We are such limited beings, so soon exhausted, the little romance of each is so quickly gone over in one’s memory !

Except one really believes oneself sublime, how can self-examination, self-contemplation, occupy us long? But who is there that, in real good faith, thinks himself sublime? The poor lunatic who takes himself for the sun, and who, from his sad domicile, calls out to the passer-by to have a care of the brilliancy of his rays. When the sadness, the want, the hopelessness, the vice, of which human society is full, rose up before me, when my reflections were no longer bent upon my proper destiny, but upon that of the world, of which I was but an atom, my personal despair extended itself to all creation, and the law of fatality arose before me in such appalling aspect that my reason was shaken by it. There is no pride, no egotism, which will console us when we are absorbed in that idea. . . . The general evil poisons the individual good.”¹

The strange and fascinating book from which these extracts are taken must of course be read with a judicious reserve and a limited scepticism. Let us not however, make it a reproach to George Sand if she has idealised a little in her self-delineation. Who is there that could bear to be drawn in the hard lines of a pitiless realism? Some fig-leaf of the ideal has been indispensable to us since the day, now grown so dim and very far off, when the eyes of the “snow-limbed Eve” and her too complaisant partner “were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” It is the office of language, as of raiment, both to express us and to conceal us. And there can be no question that the portrait given to us in the *History of my Life* does, to a very great extent, really express its author. It lives not more by its artistic merit than by the truth that is in it.

¹ *Histoire de ma Vie*, 5^{me} partie, c. 2.

George Sand's intellectual history, as she has observed in an earlier portion of her Autobiography, is, to a certain extent, the intellectual history of her age. The nineteenth century opens with a passionate cry from a band of poets, who sing, to divers tones, the same sad song of disenchantment, life-weariness, despair. It was Lord Byron who, as their Choregus,

bore,
With haughty scorn which mock'd the smart,
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore,
The pageant of his bleeding heart.

In Italy, Leopardi's deeper note had for its theme "the unblessed and terrible secret of life"—

Nostra vita a che val? solo a spregiarla.

Heine, "bitter and strange," is aptly termed by his countrymen "the singer of the world-pain." Alfred de Musset's burden is ever—

que le bonheur sur terre
Peut n'avoir qu'une nuit, comme la gloire un jour.

Even Wordsworth, in the "sweet calm" which he had made for himself among his hills and streams—

Mourns less for what life takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

While the cupeptic cheerfulness of Scott is darkened by the shadow of what Schelling finely calls "that sadness which cleaves to all finite life," as the day dying on "the broad lake and mountain side" suggests the unanswerable reflection—

thus pleasures fade away,
Youth, talent, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey.

And it will be found, for that is my present point, that, as the nineteenth century advanced, this pessimistic vein in the literature of Europe became more objective; that the general thought travelled the same melancholy road as George Sand's particular thought, from the single to the universal, from the person to the race. But more than this, "years that bring the philosophic mind" lead not only individual men, but the collection or rather flock of individual men which we call an age, from sentiments to systems, which, after all, are only sentiments formulated. Man is a metaphysical animal, whatever else he may or may not be. No gay Voltairean banter, bidding him concentrate his energies on the cultivation of his garden, will ever tie him down to the seen and actual; no fork of positivism will expel his innate tendency to look behind phenomena and to pry into the great darkness which encompasses human life. The earlier generations of the nineteenth century gazed, appalled, at

the vision of the woe
In which mankind is bound.

A later generation sought men of excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, to show the interpretation of the vision, and turned to Germany for the new Daniel of whose soothsaying it had need, passing from Shelley to Schopenhauer, from *The Revolt of Islam* to *The World as Will and Idea*. I propose to consider the explanation of the enigma of life which is offered us by the great prophet of pessimism, and by the later

writer upon whom fell his mantle, if not a double portion of his spirit. The pessimistic philosophy of the nineteenth century is a fact, and a very significant fact, in the world's history. I shall endeavour, in the first place, to give, in as plain and untechnical language as is possible, some account of its main outlines, and then to estimate its significance, as a fact, in the annals of these latter days.

(II)

Although it was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that Schopenhauer acquired his high position among "the kings of modern thought," he belongs chronologically to the earlier part of it. Born in 1788, and dying in 1860, he lived through the age whose sentiment he was to translate into philosophy, but it was so long ago as 1819 that he published his principal work, on *The World as Will and Idea*. For forty years, however, this treatise was buried in obscurity. It was not until 1851 that his countrymen were aroused by the publication of his *Parerga und Paralipomena* to a dim perception that the Prophet of a new Gospel had arisen among them; and I believe I am well warranted in saying that it was an English man of letters, the late Mr. Oxenford, who, writing in the *Westminster Review* in 1853, first displayed a clear appreciation of his true rank in the province of philosophic speculation.' From that date until the present day Schopenhauer's teaching has attracted

ever-increasing attention, and the pessimistic school of which he is the founder and chief doctor still holds a very prominent position in Germany. Hartmann, the most considerable member of it, claims, indeed, to rank as an independent thinker, and maintains that the doctrine set forth in the two ponderous volumes wherein he unfolds his *Philosophy of the Unconscious* is connected with Schopenhauer's teaching only by very slight ties. It seems to me that the claim is ill founded, that the variations of Hartmann from the earlier teacher are superficial and unessential, and that the message which the two deliver to the world is manifestly, in the main, the same. And the world has given heed to it. *The Philosophy of the Unconscious* has gone through many editions, and is now stereotyped and commands a large sale, while Schopenhauer's own works, collected and carefully edited by Frauenstädt, occupy a secure place among the classics of his country.

I think I shall do well to preface my account of Schopenhauer's speculations by an account of Schopenhauer himself. No kind of ratiocination, indeed, is more vicious than that which seeks to draw conclusions as to the soundness or unsoundness of any philosophical or religious system from the merits or demerits of particular persons who happen to profess it. But the founders of religions and philosophies are in a very different position in this respect. Their teaching is but one expression of themselves—a reflection of their own individuality, or, as Aristotle speaks, an external embodiment of their inner being,¹

¹ ἐνέργεια δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστί τις.—*Eth.* l. ix. c. 7.

and is best judged of, when that is possible, in connection with other manifestations of their personality. Let us therefore consider briefly what manner of man Arthur Schopenhauer was. His life may be read at large in the pages of Gwinner, Frauenstädt, and Lindner, and in the instructive little English work which Miss Zimmern has compiled from these and other sources. As to its external incidents, it is soon told. The son of a wealthy and well-educated merchant of Dantzic, for whom he claimed Dutch descent, and of a clever and vivacious woman, he lost his father at the age of eighteen. ' Soon after, he abandoned the commercial career upon which he had entered, and, after passing a short time at Gotha, betook himself to Weimar, where his mother was residing. She, however, stipulated that he should not reside with her: "Your way of living and of regarding life, your grumbling at the inevitable, your sulky looks, your eccentric opinions which you deliver oracularly and without appeal—all this disquiets, fatigues, and saddens me. Your mania for disputation; your lamentations over the folly of the world and the misery of mankind, prevent my sleeping and give me bad dreams." On attaining the age of twenty he entered the University of Göttingen, where, besides the humane letters, he studied chemistry, medicine, natural history, and the religions and philosophies of the East. In 1811 he quitted the University of Göttingen for that of Berlin. Thence he went to Dresden, and in 1818 he paid his first visit to Italy. In 1820 he returned to Berlin, and began to lecture as

a *Privat-docent*, but attracted no audience. In 1823 he went to Italy again, and again came back to Berlin in 1825, and remained there until 1830, when he fled at the approach of cholera, and took up his abode in Frankfurt, attracted thither by its reputation for salubrity. It was in that city that he finally fixed his residence. He never left it from 1833 until his death.

Such are the principal landmarks in his lonely, self-engrossed career. His life, through all that tract of years, was led in a routine of study, *table d'hôte*, flute-playing, walking, and sleeping. He never married, and appears to have declined, as far as possible, all the ordinary duties of life. His chief amusements were the theatre and music, and the contemplation of works of plastic and pictorial art. The picture which Miss Zimmern, a professed admirer of him, gives of his manners is not winning. She attributes to him "boisterous arrogance" and "vanity in the worst sense of the word." "Neglect exasperated him, he was easily angered, suspicious and irritable." "The heavy artillery of abusive utterance characterised his speech." "Loss of fortune was of all ills most dreaded by him." "The slightest noise at night made him start and seize the pistols that always lay ready loaded. He would never trust himself under the razor of a barber, and he fled from the mere mention of an infectious disease." He professed a great respect for the memory of his deceased father, but to his living mother he exhibited "a shocking want of filial piety." In politics he was a strenuous advocate of absolutism. Patriotism he

judged "the most foolish of passions and the passion of fools." Like Voltaire, he held the people to be "a collection of bears and swine," and he regarded all pleadings for their liberty, freedom, and happiness as hollow twaddle. Naturally, therefore, the great uprising of 1848 against the crowned oppressors of Germany was detested by him. How strong were his sympathies on the other side may be inferred from the fact that all his fortune was bequeathed to the survivors or representatives of the troops who carried out the murderous task of re-establishing the tottering edifice of Teutonic despotism. In the pleasures of the senses he indulged freely. Wine, indeed, soon mounted to his head. He was obliged therefore to content himself with shallow potations. But he was a great eater, and, as Miss Zimmern euphemistically expresses it, "he was very susceptible to female charms," with a preference, as that lady is obliging enough to note, for brown women. His landlady at Berlin, it may be assumed, either was not charming or was not brown, as he distinguished himself by kicking her downstairs with such violence as permanently to cripple her, and was in consequence condemned by the proper tribunal to maintain her for the rest of her natural life. He appears in practice to have approximated to the Byronic standard of the whole duty of man—Lord Byron, indeed, was one of his favourite poets—"to hate your neighbour, and to love your neighbour's wife." "The more I see of men," he writes, "the less I like them. If I could but say so of women, all would be well." His constant aim, as he says in

many places, was to acquire a clear view of the utter despicability of mankind. The sole virtues, using the word in its most elastic sense, with which I find him credited, were love of his spaniel and occasional doles to his poor relations, which, however, could have been no great tax upon his fortune, for at his death his patrimony, in spite of sundry bad investments, had nearly doubled.

And now let us turn from the man to his philosophy.

(III)

The first position of Schopenhauer's system is the ideality of the world. The external universe as it appears, as it presents itself to the senses, he holds to have no real existence, but to be merely a cerebral phenomenon. The visible forms of things, which seem to us the necessary and absolute conditions of all real existence, he considers inherent in the human intellect. There is a passage in the *Memorabilien* in which he brings out this view with great clearness and force.

"Two things were before me, two bodies, ponderable, regular in form, fair to behold. One was a vase of jasper, with a rim and handles of gold; the other an organised body, an animal, a man. After having long admired their exterior, I begged the genius who accompanied me to let me look inside them. I did so. In the vase I found nothing save the pression of the weight, and I know not what obscure reciprocal tendency between its parts, explained as chemical

affinity. But, when I looked into the other object—how can I express my astonishment at what I perceived ! It surpasses in incredibility all the fairy-tales and fables ever invented. Still, I will tell it, at the risk of finding no one to believe me. In this thing, or rather in its upper end, called the head, which, viewed from without, seemed an object like the rest, circumscribed by dimensions, weight, etc., I found nothing less than just the whole world itself, with the immensity of space in which the All is contained, and with the immensity of time in which the All moves, and with the prodigious variety of things which fill space and time ; and, what is most extravagant, I saw myself there coming and going. Yes, all this I saw in that object, hardly as big as a large cabbage, which the executioner can with one blow sweep off, plunging into darkness the whole world therein contained. And ~~that~~ world would have no existence if a sufficiency of objects of this kind did not continually sprout up, like mushrooms, to receive it when sinking into nothingness, so that it may always be held, like a ball, in oscillation by them, as a mental representation (*Vorstellung*) common to all, which community is expressed by the word ‘objectivity.’”¹

Such is the starting-point of Schopenhauer’s doctrine—that “the world of phenomena, known in sensuous perception, exists only for our percipient minds, and that its essential nature therefore is mental representation.” It depends upon mental activity, and ceases to exist when the percipient mind ceases. He next proceeds to inquire whether there is behind this phenomenal world a Reality, an Absolute Existence,

¹ P. 284. Lindner well asks, “Kann die idealistische Grundlehre mit der Schopenhauers *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* anfangt : ‘Die Welt ist meine Vorstellung’—kann dieselbe, frage ich, wohl lebhafter, anschaulicher und mit tieferer Empfindung in die Reflexion übertragen werden als hier ?”

an Ultimate Fact. He holds that there is, and that Reality, that Absolute Existence, that Ultimate Fact, he designates Will. This is the "universal and fundamental essence" of all activities, both of the organic and the inorganic world, "the primordial thing whence we and everything proceed."¹ "It is that of which all idea, all object, is the phenomenal appearance, the visibility, the objectification." "It appears in every blind force of nature, and in the preconsidered action of man." But this Will is not personal: it is very far from being so. It is primarily unconscious, but attains knowledge of itself in the world of representation. "The innermost consciousness of every animal and of man lies in the species." It is the Will of the species that manifests itself both in actions which tend "to the conservation of the individual and in those which tend to prolong the life of the species." "The Will, which regarded purely in itself is unconscious and only a blind irrestrainable impulse, as we see it manifested in organic and vegetable nature and its laws, and in the vegetative part of our own life, receives through the added world of representation, which is developed for its service, a knowledge of its own volition and of what it is that it wills: a knowledge, namely, that what it wills is nothing else than this world, life exactly

¹ This is admirably put by Mr. Oxenford. "Gravitation, electricity, and, in fact, every form of action, from the fall of an apple to the foundation of a republic, is an expression of the Will, and nothing more, developing itself in a series of manifestations, which rise in a graduated scale from the so-called laws of matter to that consciousness which in inferior animals reaches the state of sensibility and understanding (in Schopenhauer's sense), and in man reaches that higher state called Reason."—*Westminster Review*, New Series, vol. iii. p. 403.

as it stands.”¹ In short, Will, according to the pessimistic doctors, manifests itself as the Will-to-live. “Life is that for which everything pants and labours,” and sexual love,² with whatever trappings of poetry or sentiment it may be adorned, is merely a manifestation of this blind striving after the life of the species. This is a point which Schopenhauer regarded as “the pearl of his system,” to quote his own expression, and he enlarges upon it much and forcibly, and with a wealth of humour reminding us now of Swift and now of Rabelais. His humour, indeed, like that of those masters, is as broad as it is keen, and it must suffice here to quote his dictum, that “the growing passion of two lovers for one another is nothing else, properly speaking, but the Will-to-live already manifested, of the new being which they are capable and desirous of begetting.”³ It is the Will of the generation to come, “striving to mix itself with life,” and

¹ *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. ii. p. 323.

² He writes : “The state of being in love, however ethereally the feeling may comport itself, is rooted solely in the sexual impulse : nay, it is throughout only a sexual impulse more closely determined, specialised, in the strictest sense individualized.”—*Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. iii. p. 610.

³ In her extremely powerful poem *L'Amour et La Mort*, Madame Ackermann has presented this conception as follows :—

“Vous croyez que l'Amour dont l'apre feu vous presse
A réservé pour vous sa flamme et ses rayons :
La fleur que vous brisez soupirez avec ivresse :
‘ Nous aussi nous aimons ! ’

Heureux, vous aspirez la grande âme invisible
Qui remplit tout, les bois, les champs de ses ardeurs ;
La Nature sourit, mais elle est insensible :
Que lui font vos bonheurs ?

using for its purpose the most potent of human instincts, with an entire disregard of individual suffering. He considers women as the ministers of our weakness and our folly, and the foes of our reason : the instruments whereby the Will-to-live attains its maleficent ends and perpetuates the miserable existence of humanity. Hence, they are the objects of his deepest contempt and most withering satire.

Many important consequences flow from this theory of the Will. In the first place, it is incompatible with anything which we commonly understand by the word God. Theism, Schopenhauer holds, is a tradition of the nursery : Pantheism, an invention of professors. Secondly, it is fatal to the personality of man. What men had called the soul, Ego, or

• Elle n'a qu'un désir, la marâtre immortelle,
C'est d'enfanter toujours, sans fin, sans trêve, encor.
Mère avide, elle a pris l'éternité pour elle,
Et vous laisse la mort.

• Toute sa prévoyance est pour ce qui va naître :
Le reste est confondu dans un suprême oubli.
Vous, vous avez aimé, vous pouvez disparaître :
Son vœu s'est accompli.

Quand un souffle d'amour traverse vos poitrines,
Sur des flots de bonheur vous tenant suspendus,
Aux pieds de la Beauté lorsque des mains divines
Vous jettent éperdus ;

• Quand, pressant sur ce cœur qui va bientôt s'éteindre
Un autre objet souffrant, forme vaine ici-bas,
Il vous semble, mortels, que vous allez étreindre
L' Infini dans vos bras.

Ces délires sacrés, ces désirs sans mesure
Déchainés dans vos flancs comme d'ardents essaims,
Ces transports, c'est déjà l'Humanité future
Qui s'agite en vos seins."

first principle, he resolves into two factors, Will and Intellect, but of the latter he makes small account, regarding it merely as a cerebral phenomenon, dependent upon the organism, a function of the body. And the Will, which is "the innermost kernel of our nature," is not in truth individual: it is merely a manifestation of the one universal Will. Hence, with perfect consistency, he pronounces that "the study of psychology is vain, because there is no $\psi\chi\eta$; there is nothing but will and phenomena." Thirdly, not less vain, according to Schopenhauer's theory, is any notion of free will in man. He is a strict necessarian. "Velle non discitur" is a text upon which he is fond of enlarging. Our character—our "intelligible" character, as he terms it, to distinguish it from our "empirical" character—is born with us and is absolutely subject to the law of cause and effect which reigns in the phenomenal world. As logical necessity presides over the sequence of ideas, and physical necessity over the succession of phenomena, and geometrical necessity over the relations of space, so moral necessity rules in the actions and motives of men. Fourthly, his theory makes an end of conscience, which he thinks may be resolved into five elements—fear of man, superstition, prejudice, vanity, custom. And fifthly, it of course overthrows the old bases of moral obligation. Virtue, he teaches, consists in universal sympathy, grounded on the fact that the whole universe, sentient and non-sentient, is simply a manifestation of the one Will, and consequently is identical with ourselves. It is therefore

merely a form of self-love, and to show kindness to any man or thing is to show kindness to that which we ourselves are. "Tears," he says in one place, "spring from self-pity."

So much may suffice to convey some conception, at all events in outline, of the second great doctrine of Schopenhauer's system—that the one reality is Will, manifesting itself in the phenomenal world as the Will-to-live. His third point is that this is not a rational desire, but a blind instinct, altogether foolish and irrational. He adopts, in the fullest sense, the proposition that

This world is all a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given ;

we are the sport of that dark, mysterious power—that *puissance rusée*—Will, which is perpetually rushing into life, whether conscious or unconscious. He does not deduce his pessimism merely from the accidental sufferings of humanity, although of these he draws a very powerful and terrible picture. He takes "the high priori road," and maintains that existence is in itself, and essentially, an evil : because for every sentient being to live is to will, and to will is to strive, and to strive is to suffer. Thus, "life, so far from being a state of enjoyment, is always and necessarily one of suffering, and the deepest cause of this suffering lies in the Will itself." "Our nature is a perpetual striving, and may be compared in every respect with an insatiable thirst." It is a "struggle for existence with the certainty of being vanquished." Nor is there any exception to this rule ; it presses

upon animals as upon men, and upon wise men as upon the ignorant and foolish, but ever with the more terrible severity the higher we ascend in the scale of being. For increased intelligence merely means increased capacity for pain—the man of genius being more miserable than the fool, and the fool more miserable than the animal—while the only moments of life which deserve to be called happy, save those passed in the absolute unconsciousness of sleep, are such as are spent in the disinterested contemplation of works of art. *Æsthetic* enjoyment is the temporary deliverance from all which makes up the fatigues of life, its chain of vulgar realities and petty egotism. It lifts us, though but for a moment, above the infinite torrent of Will: the enfranchised cognition seizes on things without personal interest, and abandons itself to them as pure representation and not as motives. For an instant Ixion's wheel stops. There is the enfranchisement, on the one hand, of the contemplative subject, and, on the other, of the contemplative object, which is raised to the state of pure idea (in the Platonic sense) by being freed from the conditions of time, of space, and causality. We lift for a moment the veil of *Māyā*, for the idea stands between the thing-in-itself and the world of representation, and in disinterested intuition of it we are sprinkled, as it were, from the true river of Lethe, the stream of the Absolute and Eternal.

As to the other so-called pleasures of life, both Schopenhauer and Härtmann regard them as illusions, through which we become the sport of that

Will-to-live which is the cause of all our sufferings. Schopenhauer adds to this that all pleasure is merely negative, as being nothing but a cessation of pain, while suffering alone is positive. Hartmann, who does not adopt this tenet, has devoted much attention to the construction of a balance of pleasures and pains, the result at which he arrives being that the latter far outweigh the former. Schopenhauer's conclusion is that the world is the worst possible world. Were it worse, he thinks it could have no existence at all. Hartmann considers that this statement requires qualification on the ground that we do not know what is possible. But he earnestly maintains that the world is so bad that it had far better not exist, and that it is steadily becoming worse. Both he and Schopenhauer agree that the notion of what is called progress, "the dream that man will become in some vague future wiser, gentler, better," is the master-delusion of the age, for "the advance of civilisation means but the enhanced capacity of the human race for suffering." Far other is the outlook on which the pessimistic doctors delight to dwell. They profess a sure and certain hope that the immensity of the world's evil will work out its own cure: that the human race will, in this event, accept the nihilistic gospel of the supreme evil of existence and the universal law of suffering, and that, as the visual ray of mankind is purged by these doctrines, men will cease to propagate their species, the human race will disappear, and "the blunder of existence" will be corrected. Pending this consummation,

Schopenhauer recommends his followers, with much mystic enthusiasm and solemn earnestness, to root out the Will-to-live by voluntary poverty, entire continence, and the various other practices of asceticism. Hartmann does not endorse these exhortations. Individual denial of the Will-to-live, he thinks, profiteth little, but in the times to come, he hopes, men will be sufficiently enlightened to execute a common resolve not to will, and thus terminate the long agony of existence. Meanwhile he adjures his disciples, in Biblical terms, to quit them like men, remembering that they have received the first-fruits of the spirit, and as true workers in the vineyard of the Lord to preach the word in season and out of season, in order to hasten the final deliverance for which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.

(IV)

The late M. ChallemeL-Lacour gave to a most interesting sketch of Schopenhauer's philosophy, contributed by him to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the title of *Un Bouddhiste Contemporain*. It was not, perhaps, a very happy title. In the first place Schopenhauer could have known nothing of Buddhism when he wrote his great work, for Buddhism had not then been discovered. What he knew of the "Indian wisdom" which he so highly prized, was derived, as I have noted in a previous page, from Augustil Duperron's very inadequate rendering of

the *Upanishads*. No doubt Schopenhauer is at one with the Buddha in his doctrine as to the illusoriness of the world and the pain and suffering which are of the essence of human life. But in his philosophy we do not find those elements of poetry and ethics which are the sources of the greatness of Buddhism and of its stupendous triumphs, and which, therefore, we may take to be its truest parts; for it is by what is true in it that a religion, a philosophy, lives in the world and subdues the minds of men. Let me once more quote that saying of Novalis: "Man consists in truth." And more than this, it is only when truth is "embodied in a tale," that it enters in "at lowly doors"; only when it is "linked to flesh and blood," that it wins its way among the vast majority of our race, who, busy, sensual, dull as they are, yet by a true instinct confess and worship the something more than human which shines forth in the teachers and patterns of holiness, and truth, and self-denial. The life of the Buddha has given vitality to his precepts: to imitate him has been the higher law which has transformed the lives of his disciples. The poetry of Buddhism—and is not religion the sublimest expression of poetry?—centres round his noble figure, instinct with the supernatural, revelatory of the unseen, appealing not to men's lower natures but to that which, according to the wisdom of the ancients,¹ marks us off from the beasts; the power of looking up for something higher than sense or instinct

¹ *ἄνθρωπος* was explained to mean *ὁ ἄνω ἀσπῶν*, the looker-up; the other animals being, in Sallust's phrase, "prona atque ventri obedientia."

supplies. The Buddha is no mere man, as other men are, to the countless millions who have believed on him, but a great being, who, moved with compassion for mankind, left the glory he had among the gods to redeem the world by his "most excellent law" and his perfect example. It is not the philanthropic philosopher, but the legendary Saviour, who had lived in the hearts of his votaries for so many ages, calling up in them some image, however faint, of himself; some reflection, however dim, of his unearthly majesty.

Of this superhuman ideal around which Buddhism centres we find no trace in Schopenhauer's system. There is a similar aspect in his ethics. The doctrine of Karma may be dark and difficult enough; but it is the fount of the purity, the humility, the self-conquest, the universal charity which are stamped upon the religion of the Buddha, and which have won for him the praise of being the first of Indian sages to give a universal character to morality. Schopenhauer's Will theory is absolutely unmoral. Not only does his fundamental conception of a *φύσις* without a *νοῦς* involve, theoretically, the absurdity which Aristotle has so forcibly pointed out;¹ but its practical effect would be to overthrow the only bases upon which any ethical system has ever existed in the world as a living power. It is simple fact that every code of morals by which the unruly wills and affections of men have been governed, has derived its sanctions from the invisible, the supersensual.

¹ See chapters 3 and 4 of the first book of the *Metaphysica*.

The corner-stone of the Buddha's teaching is that there rules in the universe a supremely just law, "a power not ourselves, a stream of tendency that makes for righteousness." And it is to man's conscience, free will, and instinct of retribution that he appeals when he preaches the "Five Aversions obligatory on all men,"¹ and "the Six Transcendent Virtues whereby a man passes to the other shore."² To Schopenhauer all this is the idlest of verbiage. The more closely the Buddha's doctrine is compared with his, the more radical will their differences be seen to be. The one unfolds the royal law of universal pity, the other proclaims, by way of gospel, the utter despicability of mankind. The one has raised woman to an elevation never before attained by her in the Oriental world: the other degrades her to a merely noxious animal. The one is the widest emancipatory movement the human race has ever known: the other issues in the despotism of sheer force. The one teaches that a man is what he does: the other that a man is what he eats. "The words of the Buddha are holy words;"³ the mouth of the Apostle of modern pessimism is full of cursing and bitterness. The sermons of the Gotama are the purest emanations of Aryan religious thought: the speculations of Schopenhauer issue in atheistic materialism. This

¹ Not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, not to become intoxicated.

² Almsgiving, charity, purity, patience, courage, and wisdom shown in contemplation and science.

³ Chinese translator of the *Dhammapada*. See Beal's *Dhammapada*, p. 30.

may seem a hard saying regarding a system in which the idealistic view of the world is made a leading principle, and materialism is refuted—successfully refuted—in so many words. But the fact remains that whoever heartily accepts Schopenhauer will find himself, like Professor Huxley and Professor Tyndall, expressing a universal nescience in terms of materialism. Now it is easy to forget—I had almost said to *burke*—the nescience, but impossible not to be more and more affected by the materialism. In the great masters, materialism may have its subtleties and graces not its own. In the multitude it speedily sinks to its proper level, and becomes a crude disbelief in whatever lies out of the senses' grasp; which disbelief, appearing in a positive form, is the ancient doctrine that ginger is hot in the mouth, or what Carlyle has called Pig Philosophy.

(V)

It is as a sign of the times, then, rather than on account of any intrinsic merit which it possesses, that Schopenhauerism deserves our attention. It is curious and significant that the latest word of Western speculative thought should be of this kind; that it should account of human life, not only as not worth living, but as supremely and irremediably evil; that it should explain the universe as the sport of a malign, irrational power, and hold out annihilation as the only hope of humanity. Still such is the fact. What is its meaning?

One great note of the modern world is its intense self-consciousness. It is a characteristic which specially distinguishes it both from classical antiquity and medieval Christendom. Ancient Greece and Rome hated and proscribed the *ego*, and—what is, more important for my present purpose—the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, although recognising the supreme value of the individual soul, and addressing itself primarily to the individual conscience, yet by no means left men in introspective subjectivity, a chaos of disconnected atoms: no; it drew them together by the strongest principle of cohesion that the world has ever known, a belief in a divine fraternity, working, according to the Evangelical similitude, as leaven upon the mass of humanity. The conception of the family, the *gens*, which had been the unit of archaic society, remained, although enlarged and spiritualised. The Catholic Church was the Christian family, a *gens sancta*, and its members were *domestici Dei*. The great thought by which Christendom was permeated and knit together was the thought of God, the beginning and final end of each soul, but apprehended in the household of faith in which each soul had its fellowship of sacred things. And more than this, participation in religious rites was the great tie, also, of associations whose characters were most distinctly secular, such as military orders, municipal corporations, and trade guilds. This, then, was the organisation of human society in the Middle Ages—an organisation based on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christians as the great objective

facts of life. And the organisation remained long after the medieval period had closed. "Dieu seul est le lien de notre société," Malebranche could still write in the seventeenth century. The dominant tendency of what is specifically denominated "modern thought," whether as formulated in the eighteenth century or in the nineteenth, has been to eliminate the idea of God.

That was manifestly the issue of that "experimental psychology" of which Locke was the most popular exponent in this country, and which, receiving from the French intellect a complete and logical development, soon became predominant throughout Europe. And it is also the issue of the vastly different doctrine which was originated by Kant, and formulated by him in the *Critique of Pure Reason* taken apart¹ from the rest of his teaching. Of course Kant differed *toto cælo* from the French *philosophes* as to his fundamental principles. Holbach and Cabanis, who said the last word of their school, reduce everything to physics. They maintain that there is no thing-in-itself behind phenomena; that the phenomenon is the thing-in-itself. Kant, as we have seen in a previous page, judges that the distinction between physics and metaphysics is the distinction between that which appears and that which is, the latter being the only reality, the only "thing-in-itself," but being, also, unknowable. He does not allow to the *speculative* reason any power by which, penetrating through the phenomenal, it may reach the noumenal. He

¹ Most improperly so taken, for all his teaching hangs together. See page 102.

holds it to be restricted to the region of the relative : bounded by the Forms and Categories and whatever they reveal ; so that propositions about God, the soul, immortality, are incapable of being either proved or disproved by it. Thus does the *Critique of Pure Reason* make a *tabula rasa*, not only of what the world once called the Supernatural Order, but of the Natural Order also, except so far as regards phenomena ; while even with regard to phenomena it allows only of a conditional certitude, for phenomena are but the phantasmagoria of sense. The result, as Heine has finely said, is that men find themselves much in the condition of the prisoners described by Plato at the beginning of the seventh book of his *Republic*. It is an underground, cavernous chamber which we are there asked to picture to ourselves, but with an opening above towards the light. In it sit, and have sat from childhood, a number of men fast bound in misery and iron, not able so much as to turn their heads round, and so seeing nothing but what is straight before them. At a distance above and behind them a bright fire burns, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way, with a low wall built along it, like the screens which the marionette-players put up in front of their audience, and above which they display their puppets. Behind this wall walk a number of persons, bearing vessels and images of wood and stone, and various other materials. The captives, sitting without the power of turning their heads, see their own shadows—which are all they see of themselves and of each other—and

the shadows of the objects carried past, upon the part of the cavern facing them, and hear the voices thence reverberated, for there is an echo in their prison-house. And they refer these sounds, not to the unseen passers-by, of whom they have no knowledge, but to the passing shadows, which are all they can see, and which they take for realities.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* has given the tone to subsequent philosophic speculation, and has infiltrated itself into the minds of millions who have never read one line of it. Nor can there be any doubt that if taken by itself—Kant, we should always remember, did not mean it to be so taken—it issues in Nihilism, or, in Heine's phrase, puts a knife to the throat of Theism. Thus, as I have said, the result of "modern thought" has been to dissolve the great idea which in the time of Malebranche was still, as it had been for a thousand years, the bond of society in every department of human activity; to unloose that bond and to throw men back upon themselves. It has been observed by Richter, "No one in Nature is so alone as the denier of God. He mourns with an orphaned heart that has lost its great Father, by the corpse of Nature which no World-Spirit moves and holds together, and which grows in its grave; and he mourns by that corpse until he himself crumbles off it."¹ To this terrible feeling of loneliness is clearly traceable that intense self-consciousness of which I just now made mention, as being a special note of the modern mind, and which is the necessary product

¹ I borrow Carlyle's translation, *Mis. Essays*, vol. ii. p. 164.

of its all-absorbing scepticism, and the very source and fount of its profound despondency. The world has not for a long time witnessed such a spectacle as that which is presented in the present age of a vast number of men and women, possessing a certain amount of intellectual cultivation, endowed with a sufficiency of the gifts of fortune to dispense them from that necessity of daily toil which assuages, if it does not heal, the malady of thought,¹ and quite devoid of first principles of faith and action. For a parallel to it we must go back to the days of Seneca and Petronius, of Tacitus and Marcus Aurelius, and indeed the tone of sentiment characteristic of the decadent and moribund Roman Empire presents a curious affinity to that which finds expression in current literature: it is sicklied o'er with the same pale cast of thought, the same morbid self-introspection and egoistic melancholy. It is the doom of multitudes among us and their special misery,

To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steal it.

No: not numbed sense, but the vastly enhanced capacity of suffering which the increase of knowledge and the amelioration of the physical conditions of existence have developed. In this hopelessness and desolation, Schopenhauer arises to solve the terrible enigma of life, and he offers the solution which we have seen. Claiming to be the true successor of

¹ It is hardly necessary to quote *Candide*: "Travaillons sans raisonner," dit Martin; "c'est le seul moyen de rendre la vie supportable."

Kant, and to continue and complete the doctrine of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he expounds the thing-in-itself which his master had left unexplained, and tells us that the reality behind the phenomenal world is—not God, but—that irrational demoniacal entity, “that power not ourselves, that stream of tendency that makes for ” evil, which he calls Will.

Such is the last word of an intellectual movement which, as Caro truly observed, has “destroyed everything, the reality of God, the reality of duty, the reality of man’s personality, the morality of knowledge.”¹ Making all deductions which may fairly be made for exaggerations due, whether to an atrabilious temperament or to mortified vanity, the picture which Schopenhauer draws of human existence with the void thus caused in it merits consideration. He raises directly the question, with a vigour, a clearness, a logical incisiveness, peculiarly his own, whether life shorn of its supersensuous basis is worth living. Nor is it easy to see what answer can be given to the pessimistic argument save that supplied by religious faith. “How can I hold myself up in this miserable life, unless Thou strengthen me with Thy mercy and Thy grace?”² asks the medieval mystic: and the twentieth century echoes back the How? Renan, meditating on modern materialism—call it phenomenon if you will—was driven to cry out, “Un monde

¹ *Le Pessimisme*, p. 292.

² *De Imitatione Christi*, lib. iii. c. 3. Compare the noble lines in book iv. of *The Excursion*,

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life, &c.

sans Dieu est horrible!” To Schopenhauer belongs the merit of having exhibited that horror in its fulness.

A thing may be horrible and yet true. Its horror supplies no sufficient reason for pronouncing it to be false, but does supply a very strong reason for searching inquiry as to its truth, by those whom it concerns. If nihilistic pessimism flows naturally from the negation of the supersensuous, and if such negation is involved in the theory of human knowledge presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, taken by itself, we are imperiously led to inquire whether that theory is complete, as Schopenhauer, gainsaying Kant, alleged it to be. Does it not leave out of sight a whole side of man's nature, and that the most important side? This is a question worthy surely of deeper consideration than it apparently receives from the majority of the ready writers and fluent speakers who most confidently meet it with a negative reply.

(VI)

There is a curious passage in Gwinner, where we are told how Schopenhauer, upon one occasion, was deeply moved upon seeing a picture of Rancé, the saintly founder of La Trappe. He gazed upon it for a long time, and then, turning away with a pained look, said, “That is a matter of grace.” Strange words in such a mouth, and in an age which among its many manifold discoveries has lighted, as we are assured, upon the true method of “finding out” religions. I

suppose that, in the judgment of the highly-gifted persons who value themselves upon their proficiency in that art, the spectacle of this master of modern thought adopting what they deem the language of an exploded superstition, does but indicate how difficult it is for the strongest intellect to gain complete emancipation. They may say so if they will. It is a characteristic of their school to be "*tres affirmatif dans la négation*." Still there is another explanation, which will require something more than the contemptuous dogmatism of contemporary finders-out of religion to discredit it for many minds not ashamed to avow themselves followers of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, of Butler and Newman. That explanation is, that in this moment, at least, of his dark and ignoble existence, Religion had found out Schopenhauer; that the light which, beaming from the holy ascetic's face, dazzled and dismayed him, was in truth a reflection of that uncreated light—"æternum atque indeficiens"—which the pure in heart see, and which is "the life of men."

VII

The Newest View of Christ

(I)

I PROPOSE in this paper to set forth and to examine the view of the Divine Founder of Christianity presented in a recent work,¹ by Professor Pfleiderer—on the whole, perhaps, the foremost living representative of the intellectual movement called Rationalism. That movement, the Professor tells us, dates from the inception of Protestantism. And this is his account of it: “When ecclesiastical authority had fulfilled its teaching task for the peoples during the Middle Ages, and had become an intolerable yoke to the growing spirit of German Christianity, the New Testament was used as an armoury from which the Church of the Reformation drew the weapons wherewith to combat the priestly Church of Rome. But the literal inspiration of the Bible (*der inspirierte Bibelbuchstabe*) soon became for it a new fetter. The problem of modern Protestantism since Lessing has been to break loose

¹ *Die Entstehung des Christenthums*, von D. Otto Pfleiderer, Professor an die Universität zu Berlin. München, 1905.

from that fetter, and to win the true freedom of a conscience bound only to God. This is the problem for the solution of which we are now working." ¹ Such is Professor Pfleiderer's way of stating what, at all events, is an indubitable fact. Luther rejected the authority of the Church, substituting for it the authority of the Bible,—which meant, in practice, his own interpretation of the Bible; for, as Cardinal Aleander remarked, "he laughed at any other." But soon, as was inevitable, men asked themselves: What warrant is there for regarding the Bible as infallible? What *is* the Bible, and what is its real claim upon our belief? For Protestants—I am quoting Professor Pfleiderer in a compressed form—"the miraculous origin of Christianity rested on the miraculous character of the Bible. This was all very well so long as people regarded the Bible with the eye of faith and as a source of edification, without subjecting the writings composing it to the critical understanding. When they applied themselves in earnest to that task, the unlimited (unbefangene) ecclesiastical belief in the miracle of the supernatural origin of Christianity began to totter, and to give way to a rational and natural conception of it." ²

It was in the seventeenth century that this tendency, latent in Protestantism from the first—indeed, it is of the essence of Protestantism—began to manifest itself in the writings of English, Dutch, and French deists or freethinkers. In the eighteenth century it was specially associated in Germany with the name of Lessing. The original school of German

¹ P. 255.

² P. 2.

Rationalists displayed, as Professor Pfleiderer justly says, a want of historical sense and psychological insight in dealing with religious questions, and were totally lacking in the idea of development or evolution. Hence their inability to reach anything beyond mere negation. On the one hand, this school did not deny the good faith of the authors of the New Testament narratives. On the other, it did not admit the truth of the miraculous element found in every page of the Gospels. It endeavoured to explain that element away. But the explanations, usually far fetched, often comic, and sometimes worse, were, on the whole, more difficult of belief than the miracles themselves. Soon another school arose the most illustrious names in which are Herder, Schleiermacher and Ritschl. This school, Professor Pfleiderer judges, was far removed from the stiff pedantry and letter sifting (Buchstabenklauberei) of the earlier Rationalists, and was endowed with a deeper psychological understanding and an acuter critical sense; but inclined, more or less, to what he calls "a romantic deification of the man Jesus" (eine romantische Vergötterung des Menschen Jesus). It did not possess what he accounts that true historical method, which recognises the constant causal connection of everything that happens (das stets Kausalzusammenhang des Geschehens). A third school of German Rationalism may be said to be due to David Frederick Strauss, the practical effect—

¹ For example, they explained the miracle of the change of water into wine as a bit of juggling (ein Taschenspielerkunststück) wherewith Christ enlivened the marriage feast.

although he did not intend it—of whose famous *Life of Jesus* was to exhibit the Evangelical narratives as mere myths.¹ But the common-sense of mankind revolted against this explanation. “How was it thinkable,” asks Professor Pfeiderer, “that out of the chaos of the masses, the new society should have arisen by itself, without some decisive fact, without some fundamental event, which should constitute the kernel of the new formation?” How indeed! So Strauss and the mythical theory had in due time to give way to the teaching of the Tübingen school, founded by Ferdinand Christian Baur—a school for which Pfeiderer claims the merit of finding the happy mean between the attribution of too much and too little to the personality of Jesus Christ; which allows due significance both to it and to its environment; which—this indeed is its chief note—first applied the idea of evolution to the early history of Christianity.

Professor Pfeiderer himself, as I suppose I need hardly say, is a follower of Ferdinand Christian Baur, whose fundamental thought he regards as not of an age, but for all time. His own life's labour has been to elucidate and develop it; and no competent critic will question the importance of his work. In this latest book² of his, he, so to speak, summarises and presents in popular form the conclusions to which he

¹ That is to say, poems, legends, not deliberately fabricated, but arising out of the popular consciousness: “Dichtungen, Sagen, die nicht willkürlich ersonnen, sondern aus dem Volksbewusstsein entsprungen sind.” P. 8.

² It consists of sixteen Lectures, delivered in the 1903 Winter Session of the University of Berlin, to a mixed audience.

has been led : he calls it the "ripe fruit" of forty years' studies. His object in publishing it is to put forward what he deems a purely historical account of the genesis of "our religion," for he regards himself as a Christian—*sub specie aternitatis*, I suppose. He is well aware that this account will be unacceptable to those who rest content with the traditional ecclesiastical belief, and laments that their feelings may be hurt, their convictions unsettled, by what he writes. But necessity, he says, is laid on him, for he knows, too, that there is an exceeding great multitude of men and women, in all classes and circles, who have quite outgrown the traditional ecclesiastical belief, and who are eagerly desirous to learn what contemporary science has to teach as to the origin of that belief and the transitory and stable elements in it. He considers himself bound to minister to these inquiring minds.

(II)

Professor Pfeiderer divides his book into two Parts. The First treats of the preparation for, and the foundation of, Christianity—*Vorbereitung und Grundlegung des Christenthums*, he entitles it: the Second—termed *Die Entwicklung des Christenthums zur Kirche*—of the evolution of the Christian Church from the fellowship of the original disciples, briefly but very graphically described for us in the First Chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*. True to his principle of historical causality, he refuses to consider Christianity

as merely the result of the personality of Jesus Christ. He regards it as the product of a mighty and multi-form evolution of the antique world towards which many factors had, for long, been working together. He traces the development of Greek philosophy from Heraklitus and Xenophanes to Socrates—that precursor and prophet of the Evangelical doctrine—and to Plato, whose ethical teaching is so nearly akin to the morality of the Gospels. Then he goes on to the Stoic system, the later schools of which, he well observes, in their endeavour to combine religious mysticism with a rational rule of life, applied themselves to a problem which Christianity was to solve. He has some admirable pages on Philo, so near in some respects to the Johannine theology, who, nevertheless, stood outside the threshold of Christianity: for Philo knew nothing of the Word-made-Flesh—“a historical and enduring realisation of the Divine Principle in the personal and corporate life of the sons of God.” Further, he gives us some extremely suggestive pages on the developments in Judaism during the two centuries preceding the birth of Christ.

All this is in the First Part of his book. In the five lectures comprised in the Second Part, he describes, with equal clearness and precision, the career of Christianity from St. Paul's Apostolate to the full development of diocesan Episcopacy and the recognition of a New Testament canon. My present subject does not require me to follow him here; and there is the less reason for my doing so, as not very long ago I had occasion to traverse the same ground,

and was led to conclusions in many respects consonant¹ with those reached by him. What I am now specially concerned with is the view of Christ which he puts before us as "the historical view."

(III)

Professor Pfleiderer's account of Christ—the Lecture headed *Jesus*—fills some fifty pages of the First Part of his volume: the part entitled *The Preparation for and Foundation of Christianity*. The reason why it finds place there is that while he regards Christ as the Object of the new religion, he accounts St. Paul its founder.² His sources for the history of Christ are first those Epistles³ of St. Paul, which he considers genuine, and the three older Gospels attributed respectively to St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Matthew; that is the chronological order in which he puts them. To the *Gospel according to St. John* he will not allow any biographical value whatever; he pronounces it to be a work of didactic theology (*Lehrschrift*) composed about the middle of the second Christian century.⁴ St. Paul's account of the

¹ And in important respects divergent from those reached by him. See chapters i. and ii. of *Christianity and Modern Civilisation*.

² "Founder of the Christian Theology and Church," he calls St. Paul (p. 149).

³ The discourses attributed to the Apostle in the *Acts of the Apostles*, he regards as unauthentic, and "the free compositions" of the author of that treatise (p. 171).

⁴ He writes, "In the Fourth Gospel, history is so completely subordinated to the theological presumption (*Voraussetzung*) of the

earthly life of Christ is, of course, meagre. Unlike the other Apostles, he never walked with the Master, or sat at His feet, or listened to His words. What he knew of "the man Christ Jesus" was from tradition.¹ It was "the Lord from heaven" that was directly manifested to him in vision on that memorable journey to Damascus; and his work, Professor Pfleiderer judges, was through his teaching as to the Spirit of Christ, and its indwelling in Christians as members of Christ, to transform the conception of a Jewish Messianic Kingdom, which dominated the minds of the primitive brotherhood, into the ethico-religious Kingdom of God established on earth in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.² But—I am still quoting the Professor—this separation between the eternal (überzeitlich) Spirit of Christ and the historical person Jesus, and the "clothing of that ideal principle in the mythical form of a spiritual being, come down from heaven to earth and made man, opened the way to the Gnostic speculations whose growth in the second century threatened to dissolve Christianity into visionary images and to evaporate its historico-ethical character."³ Hence the need of an ampler history of Christ than that which was furnished by the slight and fragmentary references in the Pauline writings. That need the three older Gospels aimed at supplying. They were

incarnation of the Divine Logos that it becomes a mere poetical narrative (dass sie zum reinen Lehrgericht wird), boldly soaring above the domain of actuality to such an extent that no historical image of the life of Jesus is to be derived from it." (p. 229).

¹ See 1 Cor., xv. 3.

² Page 184.

³ Page 185.

composed, the Professor continues, in post-Pauline times, indeed, and partly under the influence of Pauline thought; but their foundation was the tradition of the primitive fellowship of disciples as to the life and teaching of Jesus; or, as another learned writer has observed, "we have in them reminiscence, guided by faith, and prompted and shaped by the circumstances and conditions of the writers."

The date of St. Mark's Gospel Professor Pfleiderer, in common with most recent exponents of the higher criticism, considers to be shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; and he sees no reason to object to the ecclesiastical tradition that it was really composed by John Mark. It is supposed to be derived from an Aramaic original, the existence of which, however, seems purely conjectural. The reasons for regarding St. Mark's Gospel as the oldest of the three are its brevity, its comparatively greater naturalness and historical probability, and also the well marked personal traits in its delineation of Christ. The author of the *Gospel according to St. Luke*—professedly no more an eye-witness than the earlier Evangelistic writers on whom he sought to improve¹—composed his work, Professor Pfleiderer opines, specially for converts from heathenism,² embellishing, and freely working up the original tradition, in order to edify and help his readers; giving, for their benefit,

¹ See the Preface to his Gospel, in which he expressly says that he is about to apply himself to the setting in order of the traditions in which Theophilus had been trained.

² And for the Græco-Roman world generally, of which Theophilus may be considered a representative.

an artistic form to the new religion. In his Gospel we find, for the first time, the account of the miraculous conception of Christ—an account which Professor Pfeleiderer regards as calculated to appeal strongly to those converts on account of its analogy with the supernatural origin ascribed to the heroes and sages venerated by Greeks and Romans as divine men.¹ And he gives other instances, which it is not necessary to quote here, even if space allowed, of the skill with which this poet-evangelist—whose artistic feeling in some sort justifies the tradition that he was a painter—wove together materials derived from profane history and pious legends, into a crown of beautiful imagery for the Evangelical narrative. He finds this Gospel dominated by the higher view of the Person of Jesus as the Son of God, in a real and unique sense, and instances, in support of that view, many omissions, additions, and alterations which it exhibits when compared with St. Mark's. I should add that Professor Pfeleiderer recognises the historical value of St. Luke's Gospel as a contribution to our knowledge of the actual life and teaching of Jesus Christ, especially because of the sayings and parables which its compiler brought together from the sources open to him.

The *Gospel according to St. Matthew*, in its existing form the latest of the three, is, Professor Pfeleiderer tells us, the least homogeneous of them;

¹ He quotes Origen's statement of the popular belief in the antique world that men of greater wisdom and strength than usual must be of divine birth (p. 194).

the original Jewish and new Pauline elements appearing in it, side by side. Its special value he accounts to be the light which it throws upon the germination of the conception of a universal church. He finds in it tokens of a further growth of the idea of Christ in the Christian consciousness, one of such tokens being the transformation given by its unknown author, or authors, to various sayings of Christ. Thus, to give a single example, which must here suffice, the "Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one that is God" of St. Mark and St. Luke, appears in St. Matthew as "Why askest thou me concerning good? One is the Good"¹; whereby, as our critic remarks, the declension of the predicate "good" by Christ is avoided. It is, he observes, pre-eminently the *ecclesiastical* Gospel, and we find in it the dogma, ethic, constitution, of the developing universal Church indicated in more or less definite outlines. Nay, he continues, even the primacy of Peter, and the pre-eminence of the Roman See are distinctly adumbrated in words attributed to Christ. I cannot follow Professor Pfleiderer further in his criticism of the *Gospel according to St. Matthew*. But unquestionably he is right in saying that in it "we have trait upon trait, the image of the belief and life of the Church in the first half of the second century."²

¹ The Vulgate correctly renders the original text: "Quid me interrogas de bono? Unus est bonus—Deus."

² Page 213.

(IV)

And now let me go on to the direct subject of this essay—the view of Christ which is the result of the application of Professor Pfeiderer's method to the New Testament. We have seen that for him the *Gospel according to St. Mark* is the most authoritative of the Evangelical narratives, as exhibiting the oldest form of the Christian tradition. We have seen, too, that he entirely eliminates the miraculous element from the Gospel narrative as being inconsistent with scientific history. But apart from this *a priori* ground, he finds, as he thinks, sufficient reason in the New Testament itself for rejecting the two main miracles on which what he calls “ecclesiastical Christianity” rests. The dogma of the Incarnation summed up in the articles of the Apostles' Creed, “Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,” he observes is not mentioned in St. Mark's Gospel¹ or in the writings of St. Paul—an omission irreconcilable with the supposition that it formed part of the earliest Christian belief. And the account of the Resurrection given by that Evangelist he holds to be a legend in process of development. This, he thinks, is clear if it be compared with the earliest account² given by St. Paul in his *First Epistle of the Corinthians*, the date of which is probably A.D. 53. That account is, “He,

¹ “Markus von der übernatürlichen Geburt nichts weiss” (p. 93).

² Professor Pfeiderer remarks, “Das ist der älteste Bericht, der aber zu keinem der jüngeren evangelischen Berichte stimmt” (p. 110).

rose again on the third day, after that He was seen of Kephas, then of the Twelve; after that He was seen of five hundred brethren at once; after that He was seen of James: then of all the Apostles: and last of all He was seen of me also." To this St. Mark adds the discovery of the empty grave and the appearance of the angel to the women; but, according to the Professor, indicates the newness of those details by the remark that the women were silent concerning them out of fear.¹ The further particulars given in St. Luke's and St. Matthew's Gospels, to say nothing of St. John's, he regards as exhibiting the natural growth—so to speak—of the legend. The appearances of the risen Christ alleged in that earliest tradition which St. Paul received, to Kephas, to the Twelve, to the five hundred brethren, and to St. James, he judges to be visionary, like the appearance to that Apostle. That this is the true explanation of what befell St. Paul on the road to Damascus he endeavours to establish in three pages of subtle and elaborate argument, for which I must refer the curious reader to his book. Here I can merely note that after indicating the variations in the three accounts of this incident given in the *Acts of the Apostles*, he points out as its essential kernel (*der wesentliche Kern*) St. Paul's sudden consciousness of a resplendent apparition (*Lichters heinung*) and of a voice declaring it to be Christ. And so in the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*: "Have I not seen the Lord Jesus?"

¹ The Professor conjectures that this detail was probably borrowed from the legend of Adonis (p. 162).

It is on this apparition, the Professor continues, that St. Paul founds his vocation to the Apostolate, placing it on essentially the same level as the Risen Saviour's earlier manifestations. Our critic allows that, no doubt of its objective reality seems ever to have occurred to St. Paul; and this he thinks natural enough, if the constitution of the Apostle's mind and the spirit of the age be taken into account.¹ But it is evident, he insists, from other Pauline pronouncements,² that St. Paul conceived himself to have seen not an earthly body, with his bodily eyes, but a supersensuous being with the inward eye of the spirit; whence the conclusion is drawn that this apparition belonged to those "visions and revelations of the Lord," mentioned in a well-known Pauline passage, to which by his psychico-psychic organisation St. Paul was predisposed, as is evident from many parts of his history.³ Hallucination, individual or collective, is, in short, the Professor's explanation of the alleged appearances of the Risen Christ.

Thus does Professor Pfleiderer deal with the two most stupendous miracles of the Gospels, Christ's

¹ "Der Kern des Erlebnisses des Paulus war doch jedenfalls der Sieg der höheren Christlichen Wahrheit über die Vorurtheile und Befangenheit seines jüdischen Bewusstseins; dass dieser innere Umschwung seines Gemütes in die Form eines äusseren Wunders für sein Bewusstsein klebete, war unter den Voraussetzungen der antiker Weltanschauung und seiner individuellen Veranlagung ganz natürlich und wohl begreiflich" (p. 139).

² He refers to Gal. i. 16 and 2 Cor. iv. 6.

³ "Solche Erscheinungen und Stimmen himmlischer Wesen kommen in der Religions-geschichte des Morgen und Abendlandes oft genug vor" (p. 139). He refers to parallel instances in the life of Mohammed.

Virgin Birth and Christ's Resurrection from the dead. The other signs and wonders related there he, for the most part, dismisses with the observation that they are mere legends--“nicht Geschichte, sondern Sage ist.”¹ He allows indeed that there is a kernel of historical truth in the stories of Christ's healing the sick, because we know now that certain maladies which are the result of a disordered nervous system--for example, paralytic affections--are cured, whether for a time or permanently, by the psychical working of suggestion. And he thinks that this explanation may be accepted of the deliverance wrought by Christ for persons supposed, according to the belief of the time, to be possessed by devils. He adds that such wonderful results appeared to Jesus Himself, as to those who surrounded Him, to be the victory of His more excellent spirit over the evil spirits, whereas they were in reality the victory of His faith and love over the misery and sin of man. The Professor further points out--what is undoubtedly true--that in those days the sense of actuality (*Wirklichkeitsinn*) was as small as the enthusiasm of belief and speculation was great: that it was an age in which no clear distinction was drawn between the physical and the hyperphysical: men expected miracles--and they got them.

Professor Pfleiderer, then, depicts Christ for us as a Jewish peasant, the son of Joseph the carpenter and Mary, and deems that the earliest historical incident

¹ Page 61. So at p. 93: “Dies alles gehört in das Gebiet der frommen Sage.”

in His career is His baptism. That the preaching of repentance and of the approaching advent of the Kingdom of God by St. John Baptist had deeply impressed Him is evident, the Professor observes, from the fact that after the imprisonment of the Saint He Himself delivered the same message: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." But though the message sounded the same—I am still quoting Professor Pfleiderer—the spirit in which it was delivered was different. Christ was no mere preacher of penance. His preaching was the immediate outcome of His own heart, strong in faith and glowing with love. It was a glad message of deliverance to the weary and heavy-laden, to the captive and the oppressed. It was the revival (*die Wiederbelebung*) of the best spirit of the prophets: the spirit of Hosea, of Jeremiah, of the younger Isaiah: and it was addressed specially to the poor, the suffering, and the sinful, who were dear above all others to His compassionate soul.

What, then, the Professor continues, did Christ mean by "the Kingdom of Heaven," the near advent of which was proclaimed as a reason for repentance? The two meanings now currently attached to the expression, he tells us, would have been quite alien from the thoughts of Christ's countrymen. They would not have understood the conception, whether of a kingdom of blessed souls beyond the grave, or of an earthly but spiritual polity of men dwelling in true religion and virtue. Nor did Christ Himself ever explain the words in either of these senses.

He thinks that Christ, meant by the words what His hearers must have understood Him to mean, and what St. John Baptista clearly had meant—the miraculous establishment, hoped for by all pious Jews from the time of Daniel, of a new and better order of things on earth and especially in Judæa, whereby the misery of the world should be healed. He conceives of Christ not merely as a religious and ethical teacher, but as a political reformer: of the promised Kingdom of God as a social revolution in favour of the poor and the oppressed: and he quotes those most striking verses in the *Gospel according to St. Luke*, in which this seems to him clearly indicated: “Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God: Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled.¹ But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation: Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger.” He quotes also other passages as favouring that view; such as: “Fear not, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom”—a promise repeated in fuller form at the Last Supper. He quotes, too, the saying of Christ, uttered on the same occasion: “I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new in the Kingdom of God”—a saying, he observes, which it is hard to interpret of anything else than a

¹ Professor Pfleiderer remarks that in the late Gospel, bearing the name of St. Matthew, and written when the Church had made some advance in the world, these verses were transformed to blessings on the poor in *spirit*, on those who hunger and thirst after *righteousness*: the maledictions pronounced on the rich and the satiate, *qua* rich and satiate, being omitted altogether.

changed condition of the Jewish people wrought by Divine Power in favour of Jesus and His disciples. He instances, also, the question of the disciples in the first chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*: "Lord, wilt Thou, at this time, restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" as clear evidence—"einen deutlichen Fingerzeig" he emphatically calls it—in favour of this interpretation. But, further, the Professor finds that Christ, sharing the Apocalyptic expectations of His time, anticipated that the advent of this new Divine order would be sudden: comparing its coming with the lightning which in a moment transforms the aspect of the heavens, with the unexpected flood of Noah, with the fire and brimstone which, without warning, fell on Sodom and Gomorrah. Nay, more: Christ declared, he notes, that it was to come before that generation had passed away; before the Gospel had been preached in all the cities of Israel.

Of course the Professor does not ignore other passages—nor does he call in question their genuineness—which militate against this interpretation; as, for example: "The Kingdom of God is within you"; "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The explanation which he offers is as follows:—

Jesus, like all heroes, was a child of His nation and of His time;—and consequently shared the Messianic expectations of His nation and of His time. Precisely because this was so, was He in a position to exercise a transforming influence on His time. That strong belief in the nearness of the approaching revolution (Wendung) was just what gave the penetrating force (durchschlagende Kraft) to His working. The highest

ideal, immediately present to Him, actually filled his soul, raising Him above all petty cares and interests of earthly life and enabling Him to apprehend the unconditional surrender of the whole heart and life to the will of God—the alone Good—as the true vocation of man. And this core of His belief endures as a type for all time. It retains its truth even for us, although we are led by history itself to distinguish between that core, which subsists, and the form, which passes away: and to discern the fulfilling of the Divine will no longer in miraculous catastrophes, but in the continuous education of humanity through the natural development of social life. Therefore, for ever valid remains the recognition of the unconditioned value of the Kingdom of God, the unconditioned obligation of each individual to self-sacrifice for this eternal end of this world (*Weltzweck*) transcending all particular ends, and the deepest responsibility of each for his own bearing towards this highest object of life.¹

The passage which I have just translated is of much interest, not only as luminously indicating Professor Pfleiderer's view of Christ, but also as a revelation of his personal convictions. Let me now exhibit what he holds as to Christ's own conception of Himself and His work. The Professor confesses that the question is a difficult one, because the Evangelical narratives are coloured by the thought of an age later than that of the events which they profess to relate. But he is of opinion that if we look at it from an historical point of view, we may be sure that Christ was not conscious of any superhuman origin or existence. Christ entered upon the career of prophet, like the Baptist before him; He laboured as teacher and Healer among His fellow-countrymen, like others

before and with Him ; His power over sick souls and bodies, however wonderful it seemed, was no unconditioned almighty power—it was conditioned by the faith of the sick, as clearly appears from a passage in St. Mark.¹ In like manner His prophetic knowledge was not unlimited. The hour of the advent of the promised day of salvation the Son knoweth not, but only the Father. He declines the attribution of ethical perfection : “ Why callest thou Me good ? No one is good but God alone.” He prays to God, His Father, as He taught His disciples to pray. He claimed to be the Son of God only in the same sense in which all good men are, and recognised those who do the Divine will as His brothers and His sisters.²

Professor Pfleiderer thinks, then, that the genuine human self-consciousness of Christ may unhesitatingly be asserted, on the authority of the older Evangelists, as a safe historical fact. The further question whether Christ believed Himself to be the Messiah, the Professor regards as still more difficult. The conclusion which seems most probable to our critic is that at the beginning of His ministry He made no claim to the Messianic dignity, but that, as time went on, and His conviction of His prophetic mission grew stronger, He gradually entertained and asserted His Messiahship, in a sense differing, indeed, from that in which the Pharisees took the word. “ A Messiah who should help the Jewish people to victory over the heathen, to freedom from the Roman yoke, would He not be ; no ; but the Messiah of the weary and heavy laden, of the

¹ St. Mark vi. 5.

² Page 93. I abridge somewhat.

pious sufferers, of the peaceful in the land, of the as yet small and powerless flock to which the kingdom was promised by the heavenly Father.”¹ And the Professor regards His last journey to Jerusalem as undertaken not to let Himself be slain there, or to keep there the Paschal feast with His disciples, but to triumph over the Jewish hierarchy and to actualise the prophetic idea of the Kingdom of God—the Almighty and wonder-working God, in whom He believed, and who, He was confident, would send to His help more than twelve legions of angels, if He should need them. The twelve legions of angels were not sent. Hence, as Professor Pfleiderer thinks, His bitter cry on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!” The Professor continues, in words which, at all events, we must account wise and pious: “Nothing can reconcile us to the overwhelming tragedy of such a personal departure from the world but the thought that it was the unavoidable means decreed by Providence for the uprising of a higher life.”

(V)

This, in the brief outline to which I am enforced here, is Professor Pfleiderer's view of Christ; and it is substantially the view of the “higher criticism” generally. I have endeavoured to present it fairly and dispassionately, although the task has, I confess,

¹ Page 101.

been distasteful, nay, painful. And now let us examine it a little. What are we to say to it? Or, rather—for here egotism is true modesty—What am I to say to it as one who believes he may claim ever to have taken for his motto “*Seu vetus est verum diligo sive novum*,” who, if he knows himself at all, desires light, from whatever quarter it may shine, and prefers it to any private darkness of his own.

First, then, I wish to bear my poor testimony—not indeed that it is needed—to Professor Pfleiderer's critical acumen and good faith. More, I do not see how any one who allows his standpoint can fairly quarrel with his conclusions. We must remember that, spiritually, he is of the house and lineage of Luther, from whose principles and method those conclusions seem logically to follow—little as Luther himself would have acknowledged them. Christianity up to the time of the Protestant Reformation possessed two distinct notes, authority and supernaturalism, closely and inseparably connected, for it was the authority which vouched for the supernaturalism. The so-called Reformation struck a fatal blow at authority. In the place of a living guide, it set up a book, or rather a collection of books, for the most part of uncertain authorship, and written in widely different ages, to be interpreted by the individual private judgment. Luther, indeed, seems to have supposed that other men's private judgments would square with his; an egregious error, as time has sufficiently shown. Of the documents brought together in the New Testament he rejected but one—one of the most

beautiful, and valuable, indeed—the *Epistle of St. James*, at which he scoffed as mere chaff; “straminea epistola.” Professor Pfeiderer, richly endowed with a critical faculty which was utterly wanting in Luther, and with a vast equipment of scholarship which has come into being since Luther’s time, subjects all those documents to a far more searching examination than St. James’s *Epistle* received from the founder of Protestantism—with the result which we have seen.

I do not understand, then, how anyone can maintain that Professor Pfeiderer, as a Lutheran (for that, if I apprehend him correctly, is what he claims to be), is not here within his rights. Nor do I see how it is possible to question the verisimilitude of many of the conclusions at which he arrives. Curiously enough, not a few of them were indicated, the better part of a century ago, by Cardinal Newman,¹ who recognised, as fully as Professor Pfeiderer, what he called the “perplexing character of Scripture as regards its relation of *facts*,” although, of course, he explains the perplexity in one way, the Professor in another. “The first three Gospels,” Newman writes, “contain no declaration of our Lord’s divinity, and there are

¹ *Discussions and Arguments*, p. 153. These remarkable Lectures on *Holy Scripture in its Relation to the Catholic Creed* were originally published in 1838, as No. 85 of the *Tracts for the Times*. They were re-published in 1872 in the volume mentioned above, long after the author had become a Catholic, with only one short qualifying note (p. 251) on an incidental point not in the least affecting their main argument: and it is within my own knowledge that on subjecting them to careful scrutiny subsequently to his nomination to the Sacred College, he found nothing in them to retract. I conceive therefore that I am justified in attributing them to Cardinal Newman.

passages which tend, at first sight, the other way.”¹ And again: “The Scripture evidence, even for the divinity of Christ, will be found in fact as little able to satisfy the cautious inquirer when he is fairly engaged to discuss it, as that for Infant Baptism.”² He notes “how difficult it is to reconcile the distinct accounts of the occurrences which took place at the Resurrection with each other and our Lord’s appearances to his disciples.”³ He asks: “Can we doubt that the account of Christ’s ascending into heaven will not be received by the science of this age, when it is carefully considered what is implied in it?” He continues: “Further [take] the account of our Lord’s temptation by Satan: putting aside other considerations, dwell awhile on the thought of Satan showing *‘all the kingdoms of this world in a moment of time.’* What is meant by this? How did he show all, and in a moment? and if by a mere illusion, why from the top of a high mountain?”⁴ So much by way of specimen of the difficulties in the Evangelical narratives—many more will be found in the Lectures whence I am quoting—discerned by Newman without the aid of the higher criticism, of which he had no knowledge when he wrote, and not much later. How could his clear eyes help discerning them? They are on the surface of the sacred text. He also discerned, indeed, what is below the surface. And that is, if I may say so, his *differentia* from Professor Pfleiderer.

This by the way. To return to the Professor’s

¹ *Discussions and Arguments*, p. 184.

² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

view of Christ. There are two reasons why, with all my ungrudging recognition of his honesty and acuteness, I am not able to receive it: why, indeed, I find it more difficult of reception than that older view which he would supersede. The first of these reasons is supplied by his method. It is really, although perhaps he might be surprised to be told so, a purely *a priori* method. He starts with a definite theory, and manipulates his materials—the very scanty materials available to us—in such a way as to make them fit in with it. I wish again, most emphatically, to declare that I am not in the least impeaching his good faith. He acts, as we all act—I speak especially from the experience of my own profession of the law—in similar circumstances. A number of conflicting and obscure statements lie before us. We apply ourselves to evolve light and order from them. We form in our minds a scheme which seems to promise the desired elucidation and harmony. And it is surprising how easily our data may be made to support our hypothesis. This is, of course, gratifying to us. We are pleased with our cleverness. Nay, we take a personal interest in the supposition which we have intellectually engendered, although it may really be as monstrous as the cloud offspring of Ixion. In illustration of what I am saying I will quote the words of a writer of a very different school from Professor Pfeiderer. The late Mgr. Le Camus, Bishop of La Rochelle, thus ingenuously describes his critical method: “Au nom de la science critique, je vais tout fouiller, exactitude et sens littéral des textes, arguments intrinsèques et

extrinsèques, pour arriver à la conclusion que je tiens d'avance pour certaine."¹ Well, this is precisely the method of Professor Pfléiderer, although he would modestly disclaim the adjective "certaine." The Catholic prelate, indeed, starts with the postulate of belief in the miraculous: the Lutheran savant with the postulate of disbelief in it: But the higher critic rummâges (fouille) the Evangelical narratives in the same way as the Bishop to find intrinsic and extrinsic arguments in confirmation of his foregone conclusion. Take one example, which must here suffice. Professor Pfléiderer, as we have seen, rejects the ecclesiastical account of the supernatural birth of Christ on the *a priori* ground that he does not believe in miracles: and finds confirmation for that rejection in two hypotheses resting on the *Gospel according to St. Mark*: the first being that it is the oldest of the Synoptic Gospels, and so most correctly represents the original tradition: the second that the supernatural birth may be taken to have formed no part of that tradition, since there is no mention of it in this Gospel. I am far from denying that these hypotheses are very plausible. But they *are* mere hypotheses. We do not *know* for certain—we never shall know—whether the *Gospel according to St. Mark* is the oldest Gospel. De Wette, one of the soundest and sanest of the higher critics—and he is by no means out of date, though he wrote nearly a century ago—did not think so.² Again, it is unsafe to infer that St. Mark was

¹ *Fausse Exégèse, Mauvaise Théologie*, p. 9.

² He thought the *Gospel according to St. Mark* an abridgment of the

ignorant of the tradition of Christ's supernatural birth because he does not expressly mention it. "Instances might easily be given," writes Cardinal Newman, "of the silence of contemporary writers, Greek or Roman, as to the great events of their time, when they might have been expected to have noticed them—a silence which has been objected against the fact of these events having occurred: yet, in the judgment of the mass of well-informed men, without any real cogency."¹ Of course, Professor Pfleiderer, the author of the famous saying, "Dogma is man's truth, history is God's truth,"² does not dogmatise; and he expressly disclaims all pretensions to infallibility. He warns us in his Preface that the conclusions which he presents are not certain, but are merely such as seem to him most probable.

There is, indeed, a true sense in which we may call probability the guide of life. But I should require a much greater degree of probability than any which Professor Pfleiderer achieves, to justify my acceptance of the new view of Christ which he offers in the name of the higher criticism. The old traditional view, whatever "private scholarly reservations"³ I may have to make in respect of it, seems to me to possess far stronger claims on my assent. For—and this

other two Synoptic Gospels. • See his *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, p. 184, and his *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Part II., Vol. I., p. 3.

¹ *Discussions and Arguments*, p. 184.

² "Die Geschichte ist die Wahrheit welche Gott gemacht hat: das Dogma ist die Wahrheit welche Menschen machen."

³ "He held himself to be, with some private scholarly reservations, a believing Christian."—*Middlemarch*.

brings me to my second objection—the conception of Christ as a mere Jewish peasant, endowed with fine spiritual instincts, fired by high enthusiasms and labouring unsuccessfully as a religious, ethical, and political reformer of his country,¹ is, in my judgment, wholly inadequate to the facts of human life, and of that record of human life which we call history. Consider what Christ has been for nineteen hundred years to the foremost peoples of the world, and to their noblest men and women. Is it possible to believe that the martyrs who counted it all joy to die for Him; the virgins, His mystical spouses, who discerned in Him “the fairest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely,” and found their life in losing it for Him; the confessors, the doctors, the ascetics, to whom His very name was as a sweet song in the ear, as wondrous honey in the mouth, as heavenly nectar in the heart—“in aure dulce canticum, in ore mel mirificum, in corde nectar coelicum”—is it possible to believe that all the generations of these holy souls were walking in a vain shadow, were given over to a strong delusion to believe a lie? Nay, though nineteen hundred years have passed away since he was uplifted on the Cross, “still His Name has Its hold on the human mind. . . .

¹ The Professor seems to be of opinion that his procedure lends a new charm and interest to the Evangelical narrative. Thus, while relegating to the domain of the fabulous the account of the interview of the disciples with the Risen Lord on the way to Emmaus, he observes that “it belongs to the most precious pearls of religious poetry of all times, which the pious mind (Sinn) will not fully or rightly enjoy until no longer impeded by the childish question concerning the literal accuracy of the story, and able to enjoy religious poetry purely for its own sake, as the fair garb of ideal truth” (p. 201).

Amid the most various nations, under the most diversified circumstances, in the most cultivated, in the rudest races and intellects, the Owner of that great Name reigns. High and low, rich and poor, acknowledge Him. Millions of souls are conversing with Him, are venturing at His word—are looking for His presence. Palaces, sumptuous, innumerable, are raised to His honour. His image, in its deepest humiliation, is triumphantly displayed in the proud city, in the open country, at the corners of streets, on the tops of mountains; . . . it is worn next the heart in life; it is held before the failing eyes in death. Here, then, is One who is not a mere name: He is not a mere fiction. He is a substance: He is dead and gone, but still He lives as the living energetic power of a thousand generations. . . . Can He be less than Divine?"

Such is the question which, we are told, presented itself to the mind of Napoleon—for the words which I have just quoted are attributed to him—as on the rock of St. Helena he meditated upon his departed greatness and his approaching death. It is a question worth pondering. But, of course, it may be answered by another question. We may be asked, Would not those reflections apply in a measure—in greater or less measure—to other founders of religions? To the Buddha, for example, and even to Mohammed? No doubt that is so. I have no wish to deny it. Why should any one wish to deny it? The unique, the incommunicable greatness of Christ does but stand out more clearly if we compare Him with other

Masters! But that they, too, had a Divine mission, I, for one, cannot doubt.¹

It may, however, be asked, How, in practice, does the new Biblical exegesis, with its affirmative negations, affect Catholics? Well, I do not know where to find a better answer to that question than in certain weighty and candid words of the Archbishop of Albi.

These specious assertions are not of a nature to trouble the faith of an intelligent Catholic. For what in fact is the basis of our faith? Is it merely Holy Scripture? No: for Holy Scripture, so admirably divine from the point of view of religious inspiration, would be rather an obstacle to belief. It contains a certain number of facts, of stories (récits), humanly speaking improbable, contrary to experience, contrary to the laws of nature, and more fitted to make us doubt the contents of the Bible than to establish its veracity. A speaking serpent, a tree conferring the knowledge of Good and Evil, another tree capable of bestowing immortality, even against God's will, an universal Deluge covering all the earth and destroying all life, a sea dividing at the command of Moses, the sun standing still at the word of Joshua, manna falling six times a week, for forty years, in sufficiently great quantity to feed more than two millions of men—these are "facts" which of themselves produce no conviction. They would even suffice to lead us to regard as legendary any profane book which should relate them. If we believe in the Bible, it is because we have antecedent faith.²

¹ I cannot pursue this topic here. I must be permitted to refer those of my readers who desire to see what I have to say concerning it to the *Dialogue on the Philosophy of History* prefixed to my work, *Christianity and Modern Civilisation*, pp. 35-42.

² The Archbishop of Albi was writing, of course, for Catholics, and in a country which, we are told, must still be accounted Catholic, although it has given itself, by means of universal suffrage, a Government of fanatical Atheists. To our own country his words would hardly apply. "The people

(la foi antécédente). . . We believe the Bible because we are born in a Christian country, of Christian parents, and, above all, because the Church requires us to believe in it. . . . We do not believe in the Church because we believe in the Bible: no; we believe in the Bible because we believe in the Church. St. Augustine thought no otherwise: "Evangelio non crederem nisi me cogeret ecclesiae docentis auctoritas": I would not believe in the Gospel, unless the authority of the teaching Church compelled me to do so. . . . But it will be objected, "Why and how do you believe in the Church? Does not your faith rest on a vicious circle?" Well, we own that there is no necessary reason for believing in the divinity of the Church. Let us not forget, in the first place, that faith is a gift, that it is a free act in the ordinary sense of the word. There is no one, not suffering from a cerebral lacuna, who could not oppose himself to it; just as he could oppose himself to evidence. It would no longer be a gift, it would no longer be *faith*, if it were deduced from antecedent propositions in the way that a theorem of Euclid is deduced.¹

In the foregoing extract from the Archbishop of Albi's admirable paper it is said: "We believe in the Bible because the Church requires us to believe in it." No doubt that is so. But Catholics do not believe in

of this country," Cardinal Newman has observed, "being Protestants, appeal to Scripture when a religious question arises, as their ultimate informant and decisive authority: but who is to decide for them the previous question that Scripture is really such an authority? When, then, as at this time, its Divine authority is the very point to be determined . . . they find themselves at sea without the means of directing their course. . . . Thus they seem drifting, slowly perhaps, but surely, in the direction of scepticism" (*Discussions and Arguments*, p. 365). I have long thought that the Bible Society is one of the greatest dechristianising agencies of the day; and, as time goes on, I believe this will be recognised by intelligent people generally.

¹ This quotation is taken from the Archbishop's article *Critique et Tradition*, published in the *Correspondant* of January 10th, 1904.

the Bible in the *same sense* as that in which they believe in the Church. Belief in the Church is an article of the Creed. So in that earliest profession of faith which bears the name of the Apostles: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." And again, in the Nicene symbol: "I believe One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." There is no similar statement in these documents about any of the Sacred Books of Christianity. A Catholic takes the Bible from the Church, and gives it that general credence which she claims for it. But his faith, as a Catholic, is independent of the Bible. A man might be a Catholic without the Bible. This is manifest. The earliest generations of Christians were assuredly Catholic. As assuredly they had not the Bible. They had, indeed, the Old Testament, which they venerated as written by holy men of old, moved by the Holy Ghost; and in their controversies they used it freely, sometimes giving it interpretations most surprising to the modern mind.¹ But in that first age of the Church there was no intention—I speak, of course, *ex humano die*—of adding a fresh set of sacred documents to the Hebrew books. The notion of a New Testament did not arise in the Christian community until the middle of the second century. So much is certain, as mere matter of history. And at last, when the canon of the new Scriptures was formed, it was accepted by the faithful on the word of the Church, as—to go no further—the well-known saying of St. Augustine, quoted by the Archbishop of Albi,

¹ See, for example, Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*.

sufficiently shows. The Saint believed in the Gospel because he was a Catholic; he did not become a Catholic because he believed in the Gospel.

Such, was, such is, such ever will be, the attitude of Catholics towards Holy Writ. They receive it from the Church to be treated with religious reverence because of its Divine authorship, for which the Church vouches. Any treatment of it lacking in such reverence, the Church condemns, especially in the case of her clergy, whose office it is to guide men in the narrow way of faith, not in the broad way of doubt. That the traditional thesis concerning it, which has come down from uncritical ages into this age of criticism, is, in all respects, tenable, can any intelligent man candidly maintain? It is for the Church to amend that thesis, in her own good time. Meanwhile, she does not discourage, nay, she welcomes loyal and temperate examination of it. Upon this Pius X., whom it is the fashion, in some quarters, to represent as the very type of obscurantism, has strongly insisted. While inculcating the duty of holding fast the faith, he blames those whose blind conservatism will endure no departure from medieval exegesis, he recognises the necessity of reckoning with the results of modern research. In a letter addressed to the late Bishop of La Rochelle on January 11th, 1906, he writes: "Eorum ratio non probanda qui, nulla in re, ausint ab usitata exegesi Scripturæ recedere, etiam quum, salva fide, id bona studiorum incrementa postulent." "*Salva fide*": faith being safeguarded: they are most pregnant words. The faith of the ignorant and

' foolish—always the vast majority of the Christian family—was especially dear to Christ's Sacred Heart. It is always an object of anxious solicitude to the Catholic Church, in the discharge of her pastoral office. She never forgets the saying of her Divine Head concerning such as scandalise the little ones who believe in Him; and when occasion demands, she repeats His warning. Compared with the conservation and nutriment of their piety, the conjectures of criticism, higher or lower, are to her as the small dust of the balance. Can any man say that she is wrong?

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